

THE Saturday Journal

A POPULAR PAPER

WEEKLY

FOR PLEASURE & PROFIT

Vol. II.

BRADLEY AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
98 William Street.

NEW YORK, JUNE 10, 1871.

TERMS: \$2.00 per Annum in advance.
\$1.00 for Four Months.

No. 65.

TRUE LOVE.

BY J. PLACKETT.

I know thou hast told me to love thee no more,
And hast turned thee in scorn quite away;
But as well mightst thou bid yon great orb not to
soar
On his course as the ruler of day.

But ever, as long as I live, must I love,
Though thou provest as false as the wind;
This passion, the heartless may rise far above;
But I, no nepeche can find.

The vicious may change their strong love into hate,
But purest love ever loves on;
It may yearn, it may sigh, but it ne'er will abate,
Till the last vital spark is all gone.

No hope may there be on this changeable sphere,
Where we bud, bloom and fade in a day;
But in heaven, the way of true love shall be clear,
When the spirit is freed from the clay.

Then tell me no more that my love is in vain,
For love is of heavenly birth;
In heaven, fruition it surely will gain,
Though it had it not while upon earth.

The Detective's Ward: OR, THE FORTUNES OF A BOWERY GIRL.

BY AGILE PENNE.

AUTHOR OF "ORPHAN NELL, THE ORANGE GIRL,"
ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE GIRL OF THE STREETS.

"Don't you dare to strike me!"
A girlish voice, high in anger and fierce
in determination.

The scene, an underground drinking-saloon known as "The Dive," situated on the Bowery, not a dozen blocks from Canal street, in the great city of New York; the time, night; the hour, twelve, and the actors in the scene—we will describe them.

In the center of the saloon, which was but a common basement, fitted up with a bar and a half a dozen small tables, stood a girl, about sixteen years of age. She was slight in figure, with a pale face, lit up by great black eyes, that now were flashing bright with angry fires. Great masses of silken hair, black as the diamonds of the Pennsylvania mines, and soft as the fleece of the merino, gathered in a simple knot at the back of her well-shaped head.

The face of the girl was white with passion; her bosom was heaving tumultuously, and the warm breath came quickly through the dilated nostrils. The full red lips, almost perfect in their beauty, were firmly shut together.

One passion alone swayed all her nature—anger!

Within a few feet of the girl stood the person to whom she had addressed her passionate warning. It was a man—an Italian, as one gifted in reading nationalities in the face would have guessed at once. The olive complexion, full black eyes, and crisp, curly hair of ink hue, told his race.

The Italian was a man of forty-five, dressed roughly, and an evil look lurked in the lines of his dark face.

Now, his swarthy features were convulsed with anger, and his hand was raised, as if to strike the girl to his feet.

Two persons alone, besides the girl and the Italian, were in the saloon. One a woman, an Italian like the man, who stood behind the bar, leaning her elbows on the counter, and gazing upon the angry pair in the center of the room, with an expression of careless unconcern upon her olive-tinged features. The other was a man of that peculiar class, common to the great metropolis, and whom the world places under the generic head of "rough."

This man was sitting on a corner of one of the tables, swinging his legs carelessly, and smoking a cigar. He was dressed in a flashy light suit; a heavy chain—looking remarkably like gold—although it wasn't—dangled over his vest. In his ruffled shirt-bosom gleamed a huge pin; had it been a diamond, a "cool" thousand dollars would not have bought it; but, as it was only an imitation, a ten-dollar bid had paid for it.

The rough had a coarse, brutal face—bull-dog; that expresses it. A thick nose, broken evidently by some heavy blow; sinister-looking eyes, an ugly gray in color; coarse black hair, cropped tight to his head; a gigantic mustache, rusty black in hue, half-concealing the thick-lipped, sensual mouth, and you have the pen picture of Mr. Richard Hill, better known to his intimate friends—and the police—as Rocky Hill; a bully and a blackguard of the first water—a bright and shining light among the shoulder-biters of Gotham.

"Why I no strike you, eh?" angrily demanded the Italian, who was called Giacomo, and was the proprietor of the little den known as "The Dive." By long custom the Bowery boys had abbreviated the name of the saloon-keeper into "Jocky."

"Because if you do, it will be the worst blow you ever struck in all your life, you bet!" replied the girl, defiantly.

"Better look out, Jocky; she's red-hot!" cried the rough, who was enjoying the display of temper, as he would have enjoyed a dog-fight or any thing else brutal.

"You one cussed beggar!" exclaimed the Italian, gesticulating wildly. "You no do vat I wish; *diavolo!* I will kill you dead!"

"I'm no beggar, Jocky!" returned the girl, in a passion. "I work hard for every crust of bread that you give me, you old miser! I won't be struck any more. I don't care what I do; the cops can take me as soon as they like; I'll give 'em something to take me for, too, if you go for to strike me again. I'm all black and blue now. I'd just as lief be dead as stop here with you. Who gave you the right to beat me? You

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"All right, sonny; go ahead," Peters said, placing his foot upon the box.

ain't my father. I never had no father, and I don't care much."

"Oh! you imp of ze devil!" cried the Italian, in wrath. "I pick you out of ze mud-gutter, bring you up like a lady; give you beautiful clothes, and you no do as I told you!"

"I ain't a-going to steal for anybody!" cried the girl, quickly. "You dress me like a lady! beautiful clothes! This is a gay dress, *this* is!" And the girl surveyed the ragged gown that she wore, in contempt.

"See here, Jocky, I've always acted square with you! I never went back on you; I always give you, fair, just what I sell. I never say that I lost some of my money, like the rest of the girls do. All I ask is decent treatment. I ain't a dog to be banged about. I wish I was a dog, sometimes; then I'd run away."

"Why don't you run away, now?" asked Rocky, with a leer upon his brutal face.

"Where could I run to?" cried the girl, desperately. "Wouldn't Jocky, here, run after me and bring me back? There's only one thing for me to do."

"What's that?" asked Rocky.

"Jump into the dock. I'd do it, too, if I wasn't such a coward. Maybe I will, soon, for I ain't a-going to stand such a life as this much longer," and the girl sighed heavily as she spoke.

"Oh, you are ze imp of ze devil!" cried the Italian. "Why you no do as I tell you, eh?"

"I won't be a thief for anybody!" cried the girl. "Ain't it bad enough for to make me tramp the streets all day and nearly all night, selling your mean shoe-strings, and hair-pins and buttons, without trying to make me do something that'll send me to the Tombs and up to the Island? Maybe it would be better for me to go there; I'd be out of your reach, anyway. But first and last, I won't steal for you, nor nobody else!"

"Oh, you're a sweet one, you are!" exclaimed Rocky, in a tone expressive of the highest contempt. "Why don't you preach us a sermon, now? Why, we ought to go

right down on our blessed knees and worship such an angel as you are. Oh, my! ain't you cutting it fat, or nothing! You're giving us altogether too much pork for a shilling. Just think, Jocky, she's a-cutting up all this rumpus, 'cos I told her for to just slyly slip a bundle out of a woman's basket as she was a-follerin' me behind. Nobody would have seed her; but she's a virtuous kid, she is!"

"Did I not tell you, you must do as Rocky say, eh?" cried the Italian, approaching still nearer to the girl with upraised hand.

The girl did not shrink from him in the least.

"I told you that I wouldn't and I didn't!" she replied, defiantly, her face plainly showing the angry passions raging in her heart.

"That's so!" cried Rocky.

"You no mind me, beggar! eh?"

"No!"

Like angry tigers, the two glared at each other with flaming eyes—the muscular, swarthy-faced man of forty, and the slight, pale-faced girl of sixteen.

Rocky looked on in delight; the woman leaning on the counter—the wife of Jocky—with unconcern.

"Hi, hi!" ejaculated the rough, "why this is as good as a the-a-ter; oncore, oncore!" and he clapped his hands together in huge delight.

"You mad-gutter imp! did I not look out for you since you was a little child, so high as my knee? and now you no do what I want?" cried the Italian, foaming at the mouth with rage, and the big veins on his forehead and throat purple with angry blood.

"Oh, you've done a great deal for me, you have, you bet!" exclaimed the girl, contemptuously. "Ever since I could walk, I've worked all I knew how for you. I've earned every bit of bread that I've put in my mouth, twice over. And what have I ever got from you, except just enough to keep life in me? a gay life it has been, too!" and the girl laughed, bitterly. "But now, I'm tired of being beaten; I'm too old for

that, and don't you dare to strike me again! I'll work for you; work as hard as I know how to; but, I won't steal for you. I don't know much, but I do know that it ain't right, and I won't do it."

"No, I won't do it, eh?"

"No, I won't, Jocky; it's played out!" cried the girl, firmly.

The child of the streets used the language of the class who had surrounded her from childhood. It was more forcible than elegant.

"*Diavolo!* I kill you, some!" exclaimed the Italian, making a terrible blow at her, that, had it fallen on the girl, would surely have felled her senseless to the floor. But the street life of the orphan had made her as quick as a cat. Anticipating the blow, she dodged under the arm of the Italian, and as he was carried past her by the force of his blow, she turned quickly and struck him with all the force of her clenched fist.

The blow took the Italian just under the right ear and sent him reeling across the room, despite his size and weight.

Nerved as she was to desperation, the girl's strength was doubled.

"Bully for you!" yelled Rocky, in delight. "Round first! the old 'un gets a hot 'un under the ear. Round two, come to scratch, Jocky, time!"

The Italian staggered across the room, impelled by the violence of the blow he had received from the determined arm of the girl, until he brought up against the wall; that alone prevented him from falling.

Half stunned by the blow, for it had lighted on a tender spot, Jocky felt of his neck in wonder. He could hardly realize that the slight figure of the girl could command strength enough to deal such a stroke.

"*Diavolo!*" the Italian cried, in rage. "Time!" yelled Rocky, in glee; "come up smiling, Jocky, or I'll throw up the sponge!"

Then the Italian seemed suddenly to understand what had happened. He drew a long, glittering knife from his bosom, and darted toward the girl.

CHAPTER II.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

In the handsomely furnished parlor of a brown-stone front mansion on East Thirty-first street sat two men; one, old, the other, young.

The old man was short and thick-set in build. His face was a peculiar one; the skin was yellow and tightly drawn over the bones; the eyes, gray in color, and sharp as the orbs of a hawk, were never still, but restlessly roamed from object to object; a thick mass of stubby, iron-gray hair crowned the head; the face was smoothly shaven.

The old man was called Obadiah Olkoff, a retired merchant, whose name on "Change" was once good for a hundred thousand dollars.

What the retired merchant was really worth was, probably, known only to himself alone; yet the world guessed that, by sagacious calculation and prudent investment, the ex-merchant had so increased the wealth made in trade that he could write his check for two hundred thousand dollars, at the least, and have it honored.

The young man, who sat before the merchant, and by the look upon his face reminded one of a criminal waiting for the judge's sentence, was nephew to Obadiah, and called Algernon Olkoff.

The young man was about twenty-five years old. In his face he bore no resemblance whatever to his uncle. His features were weak and unimpressive. In a crowd no one would have taken him for a hero. His blue eyes lacked fire; the scanty yellow mustache, struggling for existence on his upper lip, seemed like a type of the character of its owner—feeble and uncertain.

One point Mr. Algernon Olkoff had in his favor. He was superbly dressed. The skill of his tailor was plainly evident in the clothes that adorned his person. The "cut" could not be excelled; it was perfection itself.

"You sent for me, sir?" the nephew asked, in a tone wherein abasement and fear were blended. It was evident that the young man had just entered the room.

"Yes, sir," replied the old man, sharply. The contrast between the languid tones of the nephew and the sharp, metallic voice of the uncle was great.

"What is it, sir?" Algernon asked, and from his manner one could easily guess that he felt very far from being comfortable.

"How much do you owe?" asked the old man, abruptly.

"Owe, sir?" stammered Algernon, in confusion.

"Yes, sir; didn't I speak plain enough? How much do you owe?"

"I—I really don't know," the young man muttered, in utter confusion.

"Oh!" there was a great deal of meaning in the simple exclamation, so dryly uttered, and Algernon trembled in his gorgeous patent-leathers as he heard it.

"You owe so much, I suppose, that you can not carry the figures in your head. Hadn't you better have a clerk to assist you in ascertaining the amount?" the uncle continued, sarcastically.

"Oh, sir, it's not that," Algernon muttered in haste.

"Then the debt is so small that you don't trouble your head about it, eh?"

"Well, I—really—" and the nephew paused in sad embarrassment.

"Ah, perhaps you wonder why I should put such a question to you, and how I come to have any information on the subject. I received a slight bill of yours this morning; your tailor's bill," and as he spoke, the old man drew an envelope from his pocket; opening it he produced the bill. "Your tailor must be like the Irishman's snipe—all bill," and the uncle chuckled, dryly, as he spoke.

"You owe him the modest sum of two hundred and ten dollars. That is for your spring outfit, I suppose. When I was your age, sir, fifty dollars a year would have been an extravagant sum for me to have paid for clothing. But I worked hard and earned my money—you understand, *I earned my money*," and he shook his finger, expressively, in his nephew's face.

"I didn't have any rich uncle to foot my bills for me. This tailor of yours sent this bill in an envelope addressed to me. Of course, I understand. He looked in the directory, found my name—same residence—naturally thought that I was your father. Hadn't an idea, of course, that I was only your uncle. Now, then, what are you going to do about this bill?"

"I—I don't know," Algernon stammered, in blank dismay.

"How many times already have I paid your debts?" asked the old man, suddenly.

"Really, sir, I—"

"And again the hopeful nephew broke down.

"Three different times, sir!" exclaimed the uncle. "You see I remember, if you do not. I suppose you think I will pay them again, eh?"

"It is almost too much to expect, sir," began Algernon, but the uncle cut him short.

"But you do expect it!" he cried. "You will not be deceived. I shall pay your debts once more."

The face of Algernon brightened up.

"But, it is for the last time."

Algernon looked astonished.

"I sent for you that we might have a little serious conversation together," the old man said, gravely. "You know I am thought to be wealthy?"

"Yes, sir."

"You have doubtless fancied that, as you are the only living relative I have in the world, you will be my heir."

"My dear uncle, I am sure that I have never thought of such an event as your death," Algernon hastened to say. "Such a calamity would—"

"Now, don't be gushing, young man; it don't become you. You have no idea how much you resemble a dying calf when you try to be sentimental," interrupted the old man.

Algernon subsided.

"As I said before, you expected to become my heir. I deem it my duty to tell you that there is not the slightest possibility of such an event happening."

Algernon looked at his uncle in blank amazement. His brain was bewildered. For the life of him he couldn't understand what his uncle meant.

"You are silent—you don't understand, of course. It's natural; how could you be expected to understand?" the uncle exclaimed. "But, I'll make it all plain to you. As I said before, I'll pay these debts of yours; perhaps give you a few hundred dollars to help you on in the world; but, after that, expect no further assistance from me. Of course you are welcome to a home in my house as long as I live, for you are my brother's child; but money assistance, no. Possibly, you wish to know the reason of this sudden determination?"

"Yes, sir; if you do not object," replied Algernon, timidly. It was a riddle he could not solve.

"The reason is that I think it my duty to preserve my property for my heir," said the old man, gravely.

"Your heir, sir?" exclaimed the young man, opening his eyes wide in astonishment.

"Yes, sir, my heir," replied the uncle, firmly.

"But I always understood, sir, that I was the only relative that you had in the world." The mind of the young man was in a fog.

"Exactly; and I have no doubt that it will greatly surprise you when you hear that I expect the arrival of my daughter, daily."

"Your daughter?" cried the nephew, in blank amazement.

"Yes, sir, my daughter." The old man was enjoying the surprise of the nephew.

"But, sir, I never knew that you had a daughter," Algernon said, utterly confounded.

"Very likely; but I have a daughter, nevertheless, as you shall see with your own eyes when you are many days older," Obadiah said, dryly.

"But, uncle, I never knew that you had been married. I never heard you speak of it."

"Ah, yes; one forgets those little things, once in a while, you know," and again the dry chuckle was in the voice of the old man.

Algernon felt the blow severely. All his life he had looked forward to being his uncle's heir. He had never dreamed of the possibility of any one matching his inheritance from him. But now, the golden dream had vanished, and black despair stared him in the face.

"I have acquainted you with this knowledge, that you might prepare to fight the world on your own hook. As I said before, you can always have a home here, but no more," the old man said, finding that Algernon did not reply.

"I am very much obliged for that, sir," replied the nephew, dreamily. And as he spoke he rose as if to leave the room.

"Oh, by the way!" exclaimed the uncle, in his sharp, restless way. "I've got something else to say to you; wait a minute."

"Yes, sir."

For a moment the old man gazed at the floor, and stroked his face thoughtfully.

"It's about Miss Blake," the uncle said, suddenly.

The young man started and seemed confused.

"I have noticed that you and Miss Blake seem to be very fond of each other's society. I have never spoken about Miss Blake to you before, but I will now. Her father was a sea-captain in my employ. He died abroad in the Chinese seas, murdered by pirates while protecting my ship and goods from the villains. He gave up his life, like the good and honest man that he was, to protect his employer's interest. He left a wife and child. I couldn't go to that widowed woman and helpless little one, and say: 'Here's a thousand dollars—more; your support, your aid, died for me; let that pay for him.' No; gold can't supply the loss of a husband and a father. I did the best I could. I took Mrs. Blake and her child into my family, which consisted of myself, solely. Mrs. Blake took the whole charge of my household. When she died, her daughter took her place. I look upon that daughter as being almost as dear to me as my own child."

"Therefore, sir, no nonsense with that girl. She's too good for you—not your style at all. She wants a man for a husband; you've been very little better than a tailor's sign all your life. You understand! no nonsense."

"No, sir," and Algernon left the room, anger and despair swelling in his heart.

CHAPTER III. ON THE SCENT.

On the corner of Canal street and the Bowery stood a man plain dressed in dark clothes. He was smallish, stoutly built, fellow, with short, curly hair of a yellow tinge, and a cool, clear gray eye.

The man was whistling softly to himself, as he waited on the corner; for waiting for some one he evidently was. Not a man, woman or child passed by him and escaped the notice of the shrewd gray eyes.

"Well, he's precious long," he muttered, impatiently. "I wonder if he's hit off the mark. Finding a needle in a bundle of hay is a fool to this job. But I won't say 'die' yet. We may get the clue, just by accident. This is the third day we've been at it. A bond-robber couldn't give more trouble."

Again the detective—for the man waiting on the corner was the celebrated detective, John Peters, reputed to be one of the keenest detectives in the country—commenced to whistle.

Then a man came up the Bowery, crossed Canal street, and approached the detective.

The new-comer was a tall, lank person, with short yellow hair, and a rough-looking, honest face, whereon was an expression of great simplicity. One would have guessed him to be some countryman fresh from the rural districts. And yet this seemingly guileless youth was Peters' partner, Henry Henry, more commonly called Hank Henry—a detective officer with a reputation second to none other in the country.

"What luck, Hank?" asked Peters, as the other approached.

"None," the officer replied. One peculiarity about the countrified detective was that he seldom used many words. His speech was laconic and terse to a degree.

"By thunder! the luck is against us!" Peters exclaimed.

"Have you failed, too?"

"Yes; I couldn't discover any trace of the girl."

"What's the programme now?"

"Well, I hardly know. I think we have examined every saloon on the Bowery from Division street to Canal."

"I think we have," Hank rejoined.

"The clue is such a faulty one. The party forgot the name of the saloon and the exact location, but, as near as he could remember the direction, it was on the Bowery, near Canal street."

"Perhaps it's above Canal street," Hank observed.

"Maybe so, partner," Peters replied. "tomorrow we'll give our attention to all the saloons above here. The party is willing to come down handsomely, and we'll stick to it while there's a hope left of discovering the person."

"You've got the description?"

"Yes, all correct."

"Peters, I've got an idea!" cried Hank, suddenly.

"What is it?"

"This party we're after is in the street a good deal. She ought to be known to the bootblacks, newsboys, etc. Suppose we pump them; we might tumble onto the girl, just by accident."

"That's a good idea, Hank!" cried Peters; "we'll try it on right away. Let's look at the description."

Then the detective took a memorandum-book from his pocket, opened it, and read aloud:

"Girl about fifteen or sixteen; jet-black eyes and hair; hair worn in a knot behind. Rather tall, slender figure. Complexion fair. Peculiar hands; long, slender fingers. Poorly dressed. Deep, musical voice. Face rather pretty and ladylike; looks above her station. Sells small articles on the Bowery. Lives in a basement saloon on the Bowery, above Canal street. Mem.—Doubt about being above Canal street—may be below."

"There, that's the description, and all the particulars known about the girl. It's getting late, but as we're like the birds we hunt down—only in our ways—it don't make much difference. The first boy we see we'll go for."

And even as the detective spoke, a shrill voice at his side cried out:

"Black yer boots, sir?—shine 'em up nice—only five cents!"

The detective looked down and beheld a wee little fellow, dressed in a ragged suit, with a coat much too big for him, that hung from his neck to his heels. A round, almost shapeless hat covered his head. From under the hat came tangled, curly masses of bright red hair. Keen little blue eyes, as bright as the eyes of a rat, peered out from amid the elfish curls that clustered on his forehead. His face was ornamented with streaks of dirt that almost hid the true color of the skin. For such a little urchin, the boy had an enormous mouth. He seemed a happy, contented little beggar, for his thin face was bright with a cheerful smile, and his shrewd eyes twinkled like two tiny stars as he looked up into the face of the detective.

"Yes, lemme black 'em, boss; make 'em shine, now, so you kin see yer face in 'em!" the boy urged, as he unsung his box from his shoulder and planted it persuasively by the foot of Peters.

"All right, sonny; go ahead," Peters said, placing his foot upon the box.

The boy unpacked his kit and proceeded to operate on the boot.

"What's your name, bub?" the detective asked.

"Shrimpy, sir," the boy answered, rubbing away industriously at the boot.

"Shrimpy, eh? Why, that's a queer name."

"Yes, boss; I 'spect I was called it 'cos I'm a little cuss," said the boy, cheerfully.

"Where do you live?"

"Round in spots."

"No particular home, eh?"

"No; I jes' lay 'round loose."

"Do you travel on the Bowery, here?"

"Yes, this my stampin' ground," the boy replied.

"Doing pretty well, now?"

"Only middlin'; times ain't wot they used to be; biz is dull," and as he talked he worked away industriously on the boot.

"I suppose you know all the rounders that travel on the Bowery?"

"Well, I guess I do," the boy replied, confidently.

"Do you know a girl about sixteen, black hair and eyes, who sells little things, like shoestrings and buttons, on the Bowery?" the detective asked, carelessly.

The boy paused in his work, and cast a shrewd glance in the face of the man.

"Wot do you want to know fur?"

"Oh, only for fun," Peters replied.

"Well, I don't know any gal like that," the boy said, slowly, and he commenced operations on the other boot.

"My young friend, did you ever go to school?" asked the detective, quietly.

"Yes; an' I were a glad to git out, 'cos it was dull to hear the cove up in the box a-talkin'!" the boy replied, truthfully.

"Then you don't know what will happen to you if you tell a lie?"

"Yes I do," replied Shrimpy, quickly.

"Oh, you do?"

"You bet! I told a lie 'bout a feller once, an' he cotted me, and walloped me, 'cos he was bigger nor I was, an' I didn't have no show fur to get hunky with him."

"You lied to me just now, when you said you didn't know the girl I asked about," Peters said, sternly.

Shrimpy looked up in the face of the detective, with a frightened look upon his thin features.

"Well, I ain't a-goin' for to get a cove in trouble," the boy said with a snifle.

"Oh, you know me, then?"

"In course I does. You're a de-etective. I see'd you one Fourth of July, on Broadway, when you jammed a feller's head through a window 'cos he fired a pistol at you."

"Now, my young friend, you have made a great mistake in one thing; though I am a detective, I don't intend any harm to this girl, but a great deal of good. There's a friend of mine who is very eager to find the girl and reward her for a service she did him. I have a suspicion that you know where the girl is to be found. It may not be the one that I want though, but I am willing to pay something to find out whether it is or not."

"If it's all square," said the boy, again proceeding to polish the boot.

"It is; I give you my word for that," said the detective, gravely.

"How does she look?" Shrimpy asked.

Peters took the memorandum out of his pocket and read the description aloud.

"That's Lill!" the boy said, when Peters had finished.

"Lill?"

"Yes; the 'Bowery gal'; that's wot everybody calls her. She's a reg'lar stunner, she is!" cried Shrimpy, enthusiastically.

"You know where she lives?" said Peters, eagerly.

"Yes; she lives with Jocky, down in the 'Dive'."

"How far from here is that?"

"Only a little way; I'll take you right there, if you wants me to," replied the boy, giving the boot the finishing touches.

"I'll give you a twenty-five cent stamp for your trouble if you will," Peters said.

"I'm very much obliged to you, 'cos I want to raise stamps enough for to git me a spring suit," replied the boy, with a glance at his ragged coat. "But I say; you ain't a-comin' any gum-game, is you?" the boy asked, rising to his feet, with a look of distrust upon his sharp features.

"No; that's honest, I don't mean the girl any ill."

"Cos I wouldn't go back on a feller I know; 'tain't square," Shrimpy said, with a wise shake of the head.

"You're a little man; but go on," the detective replied.

The boy led the way down the Bowery, while the two detectives followed in the rear.

Five minutes' walk, and the three descended the steps that led into the saloon known as "The Dive."

(To be continued.)

The Winged Whale: OR, THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
"WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV. "TO THE DEATH!"

On the Monday afternoon that had been fixed on for the American to encounter the Spanish captain in hostile strife, three men left the shadows of Pensacola's walls and plunged into the forest that lay to the north of the city.

The three men were the two Americans, Red Rupert and Decius Andrews, and their Spanish host, Garcia.

Under his arm, Garcia carried a long, peculiar-shaped parcel wrapped in a green cloth. The practiced eye of a soldier would have detected that the mysterious package contained two swords.

Carelessly chatting together as they walked onward, none would have guessed that the three were bent on a mission of strife.

An hour's walk and the friends entered the little glade known to the Spaniard as "Indian Camp," the spot selected for the hostile encounter. The glade was a natural opening in the forest, some fifty feet in width. The tall trees overshadowed the opening and shut out nearly all the sunlight, though here and there the bright rays stole stealthily through the tree-tops and imprinted their blazon on the ground.

The turf that covered the earth was as soft and fine as velvet; the wild, free vines, the children of the wilderness, crept over the bushes and filled the air with the sweet odor that their blossoms gave.

The two Americans surveyed the spot with admiration. It was the first time their eyes had ever looked upon it. To Garcia the glade was well known. He had acted as an assistant in an affair of honor there before.

"What a beautiful spot!" cried Rupert, in admiration.

"Putty as a picture! What a pity that human blood must stain its loveliness! But, that's human nature all over; man is a destructive animal," remarked Andrews, philosophically.

"It is indeed a beautiful spot," Garcia said. "I have seen two desperate encounters here. In one, my own friend was killed outright by a fatal lung straight through the heart; in the other, both of the principals were mortally wounded. One died on the field; his opponent, just as we carried him within the city."

"Heaven alone knows how this affair will end," Rupert remarked, carelessly. "I shall do my best to protect my own life, perhaps to take the life of my foe, for I am sure that, while he lives, I shall not be safe from his attacks."

"The 'pisoned serpent' growled Andrews, in wrath. "It's a wonder that he agreed to meet you in fair fight. He likes better to stab a man in the dark, or to shoot him down from behind a tree, than to face him openly."

"Rupert's challenge left him no other course but to fight fairly. If he had refused to accept the challenge, all his regiment would have branded him as a coward," Garcia said.

He tried to get out of it by springing a mine on Rupert, on the beach, the other night. If I hadn't been round with my weather eye open, things would have been squally," Andrews said, emphatically.

"We are first on the ground," Rupert remarked, changing the conversation.

"We are early," Garcia replied, examining his watch as he spoke. "It is but half-past three; the time was fixed at four. We have a good half-hour yet."

"I would that the time were come!" exclaimed Rupert, impatiently. "I am weary of delay."

"Patience! the half-hour will soon pass. Have you ever seen this Estevan handle a sword?" Garcia asked.

"Never," Rupert replied. "A week ago I had never seen the man."

"He is reported to be one of the best swordsmen in the Spanish army."

"The cap'n will cook his goose for him, though!" Andrews exclaimed, confidently.

"That I am not a master of fence is true, but I know something of the sword, and a shrewd trick or two from the cutlass exercise that I think will tax all his skill to guard against. Besides, I shall not attempt to play with this opponent, as I did with the seeming youth that I encountered for him. I shall not give him a chance to practice any of the arts of the fencing school upon me. I shall act upon the offensive. The moment our blades meet, let him look to his life, for I warrant me 'twill need all his strength and skill to guard it."

"I hear footsteps in the forest!" cried Andrews, suddenly.

"I must be our men!" Garcia said.

The footsteps came nearer and nearer; and then, from the concealment of the

shrubbery, Captain Estevan, Lieutenant Cadova, and another Spaniard, who wore on his shoulders the golden mark of an officer, advanced into the little glade.

The three friends returned the salute of the Spanish officers.

"Ensign Santana," said Cadova, introducing the strange officer, who carried under his arm a parcel like in shape to the one that Garcia bore.

Estevan remained at the edge of the glade while the other two advanced to meet Garcia and Andrews, and arrange the details of the duel. Rupert walked toward the forest and leaned carelessly against a tree-trunk.

"We are a little in advance of time, but I suppose that will be no objection. We may as well proceed with the affair at once. My principal is anxious to return to the city as soon as possible. He has an engagement with a lady this evening," Cadova said, arrogantly.

The three friends understood the object of Estevan's second in an instant. He wished to irritate Rupert, and so, by anger, unsteady his hand.

"You've forgot one thing!" exclaimed Andrews, suddenly.

"Indeed?" said the Spaniard, looking around him in astonishment; "what is it?"

"A litter to carry your Spanish captain home on; he'll never be able to walk," the Yankee said, coolly. "Besides, you ought to have two more seconds here; two of you will never be able to hold him and keep him from running away."

The face of Estevan flushed scarlet and an angry oath came from his lips at the taunt. Cadova did not reply to the Yankee's words. He felt that he had got more than he had bargained for; but, as he had brought it upon himself, he could not well complain.

"Enough, senior; let us to business," the lieutenant said, curtly. "I see that you are provided with swords. Will you use your own or ours?"

"We will open the parcels and examine both; then decide," Garcia replied.

The wrappings were removed from the shining blades. There was no perceptible difference in the swords. They decided to use the weapons that Garcia had brought.

"Now, senior, what are the conditions of the fight?" asked Cadova.

"A duel to the death!" cried Estevan, fiercely, answering the question of his second.

"That is perfectly agreeable to me," Rupert said, coldly. There was a strange contrast between his calmness and the fiery passion that burned in the veins of Estevan.

"It is understood, then; a duel to the death?" Cadova asked.

Garcia bowed assent.

"As soon as your principal is ready, senior—" and Cadova presented the swords to Garcia; he chose one, and then the lieutenant carried the other to Estevan.

In fiery impatience the captain stripped off his coat and vest, rolled up the sleeve of the right arm, and prepared for the fight. As he approached, Cadova noticed that Estevan was fairly trembling with passion.

"Sdeath, captain! you must not give way to rage. Look at the American! he's as cool as one of the icebergs of his native North!" Cadova exclaimed.

"I can not help it!" Estevan cried, angrily. "I can not restrain my rage at the sight of this cursed adventurer. I swear that only one of us will ever leave this spot alive."

"If you don't restrain your temper, this fellow will pink you, sure!" Cadova cried, impatiently. "By the Mass! you'll make the words of this Yankee devil come true, and you'll be carried home on a litter. For the honor of our regiment, restrain yourself. I know that you are more than a match for this heretic, if you are only half yourself."

"I will be calm. I can not understand why I should hate this man so fiercely. It is a mystery, even to myself, but the sight of him stirs up all the bad blood within my veins," Estevan said, thoughtfully.

"That's right! Be cool, and the life of your foe is in your hands."

Rupert followed the example of the Spaniard, and removed his jacket, rolled up the shirt-sleeve of his sword-arm and grasped the handle of the rapier. Springing the point of the blade into the earth, he tested its temper.

"Well?" questioned Garcia.

"A beautiful blade," Rupert answered.

"I would it were a trifle heavier, for I intend to try a cutlass-stroke upon him, and I fear that I can not make the blow weighty enough to disable him. Someway—I know not how it is—now that I stand here ready to face my foe, sword in hand, I feel that my anger is dying away. I do not and will not seek his life. I can not explain why my hatred has abated, but so it is. He deserves punishment, however, for the cowardly attacks he has made upon me. I shall strive to disable him, so that, for a few weeks at least, he will not be in a condition to work harm to any one."

Then with his handkerchief Andrews bound the rapier securely to Rupert's hand. Cadova had performed the same kind office for Estevan.

The American and the Spaniard advanced, met in the center of the glade, and crossed swords.

The contrast between the two was great. Tall of figure and brawny of muscle, Rupert towered above the Spaniard, who, slight of form and not over-tall in stature, seemed but a puny opponent to the muscular sailor. But, in a sword contest, the wrist, supple as the willow and firm as the rock, is what decides the victory.

Estevan's calmness had returned to him, but there was an angry spirit glaring out of his dark eyes, and the expression upon his thin lips boded danger.

Warily the foes crossed swords.

A moment the shining blades interlaced and twined around each other; then, with a sudden twist, the American disengaged his blade, jumped back out of distance, and then dashed in upon the Spaniard. Estevan, bewildered by the unlooked-for feint, knew not how to guard against the unexpected attack; no rule of fence that he had ever been taught could avail him here. But perceiving the point of the attack, the Spaniard gave ground and instinctively threw up his blade to guard his head.

Too late for full protection was the movement of the captain; for, whirling through the air, the rapier of Rupert descended upon the head of Estevan, impelled by all the strength of the muscular arm of the sailor.

The light blade with which the Spaniard attempted to guard his head was snapped in twain. The steel of Rupert's sword laid the cheek of the captain open to the bone,

and hurled him over backward to the earth.

Quickly the Spanish officers sprung to the assistance of the fallen man, while Rupert leaned calmly on his sword and waited for his foe to rise.

Estevan was uninjured, save the ugly cut upon his cheek. His eyes sparkled with rage as he rose to his feet, and tried to stanch the flow of blood from his wound.

In angry tones Cadova protested against the unfair means that Rupert had employed.

"Such a mode of fighting was never heard of!" he declared.

"Senors, I appeal to you!" Rupert said, calmly, turning to Garcia and Andrews.

"I have seen nothing but what is warranted by the code of honor," Garcia replied. "A man has the right to select such mode of attack as may seem most proper to him."

"Give me another sword!" cried Estevan, fiercely. "We have not finished yet."

CHAPTER XXVI. THE ARREST.

ESTEVAN'S rage was plainly visible in his face, which was distorted with passion. Reckless of all danger to himself, he thirsted for the life of his foe. The blood was welling slowly from the ugly gash in his cheek, and the flesh around the cut was swollen terribly.

"Give me another sword, I say!" the Spaniard cried. "But one of us must leave this glade alive. It shall be a fight unto the death."

Garcia advanced and presented the rapiers for his inspection. Carefully Estevan tried the blades by springing them into the earth.

"I do not care to have my life a second time placed at the mercy of a foe because of a hidden flaw in the steel which should guard the life!" he cried, as he examined the swords.

"I must protest, though, against the mode of fighting that your principal adopted," Cadova exclaimed, to Garcia.

"I answered your objection before; I do not choose to reply a second time," said Garcia, haughtily.

"By Heaven, senior! your principal is no better than—" but Cadova paused, for Andrews had quietly advanced and stood within arm's length of the lieutenant; and from the peculiar way in which the Yankee had drawn back his right arm, as well as from the threatening

the sailor replied, coldly. "I think that it is better that the affair should be settled here at once, than postponed. Your son will again attempt my life, like the cowardly assassin that he is, and the consequences will be that I shall kill him in the open street, without giving him a chance for his life. Here, at least, if he falls, he will die like a soldier, and not like a villainous cut-throat."

"Father, again I ask you to retire and leave us to settle our quarrel in our own way!" cried Estevan, stung to the quick by the contemptuous words of the American. "We have had enough of words; let our swords speak."

"You will not listen to reason, then?" exclaimed the commandante, his face pale as the face of the dead.

"His death or mine," replied Estevan, implacable hatred in his face as he looked with lowering eyes upon his foe. Rupert returned the glance with a contemptuous smile.

"Since you will not heed my words, I will use force!" exclaimed the commandante, sternly.

All the actors in this strange scene looked upon the stern face of the aged soldier in astonishment.

"Advance!" cried the commandante. Then into the glade, from the shelter of the wood on all sides, stepped the Spanish soldiers with leveled muskets. The dueling party in the center of the glade were completely surrounded.

"Treachery!" cried Rupert between his clenched teeth, as he looked upon the shining barrels leveled upon him.

"What else from these cowardly curs?" exclaimed Andrews, who had thrust his hand inside his jacket and grasped a loaded pistol, which he carried, concealed there. But a moment's thought convinced him that resistance was folly in the face of overpowering numbers.

"You are all my prisoners, gentlemen; throw down your arms!" cried the commandante. "Captain Estevan, Lieutenant Cadova and Ensign Santana, you will consider yourselves under arrest. Give up your swords. I have tried to reason with you, gentlemen, and failed. I find that force only can succeed."

Reluctantly the prisoners, for they were such indeed, obeyed.

"I told you I feared treachery," muttered Andrews in Rupert's ear. "We've run into a rat-trap here."

"Courage; all will yet be well," Rupert replied.

"Father, you have disgraced me forever!" cried Estevan, in anger.

"And you broke the word you gave to me. Had I not been misinformed regarding the time of meeting, I would have sprung this mine upon you, ere you could have struck a single blow, son!" and the commandante turned to Rupert as he spoke.

"If you will give me your parole not to attempt to escape, I will spare you the pain of being marched through the city between a file of soldiers."

"No, son, I will not give you that pledge," Rupert replied, firmly.

"You will not?"

"No; you have taken advantage of your official position as Commandante of Pensacola to interfere in a private quarrel. You arrest me simply to save your son from punishment, but he so richly deserves. Guard me well, for, if chance places within my reach the means of escape, be assured I shall not hesitate to avail myself of them," Rupert said, with dignity in his bearing.

For a moment the aged soldier looked upon him without replying.

"Well, be it as you wish, son," he said, at length. "Sergeant," and he turned to the soldier in command of the squad, "keep close watch upon the prisoner. Seniors, you are free," he addressed the remark to Garcia and Andrews, much to their astonishment.

"Commandante, I question your right to detain me!" Rupert said, with cold disdain. I am a citizen of the Republic of the United States; have committed no crime against the laws of Spain. With what offense am I charged that you dare to restrain me of my liberty?"

"A citizen of the United States?" questioned the Spanish officer, a peculiar smile upon his face.

"Yes," Rupert answered, firmly.

"The Government of Spain offers a reward of a thousand gold pieces for the head of a certain man known as Lafitte, and by many called 'The Terror of the Gulf'!"

"What has that to do with me?" questioned Rupert.

"Nothing, only that you are my prisoner," replied the Spaniard.

"Do you think that I am Lafitte?" asked the sailor.

Gradually the soldiers had gathered near the two, forming a circle around them. Andrews had profited by the interest excited by the passage of words between the commandante and Rupert, to gradually edge out of the circle of soldiers, and little by little, to make his way to the wood. This movement he executed without notice, and, once near the cover of the timber, with a step as light as the footfall of the deer, he disappeared within the thicket.

"I do not choose to say what I think," replied the Spaniard. "You forget your position, son; you are the prisoner, I am the judge. It is my place to question, yours to answer. Seniors, and he turned to the two officers who stood together with folded arms and gloomy brows, "give me your promise not to proceed further in this quarrel and I will release you from arrest. You must be aware, seniors, that there is an edict by our gracious king against the practice of dueling by the officers in the Spanish service."

The officers gave the required promise. Looking around, the commandante noticed the disappearance of the stalwart Yankee.

"So, your friend has sought safety in flight? If he is an honest man, what does he fear?"

"The treachery that seems inseparable from your race," replied Rupert, haughtily. The commandante bit his lips. The shot struck home.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LAFITTE, THE PIRATE.

Closely guarded between the two Spanish soldiers, Rupert was conveyed away from the glade. Estevan followed sullenly in the rear of the party, in company with Cadova and Santana. The lieutenant told the young man of his unlucky meeting with the commandante, and how he had fallen into the trap that the words of the aged officer had made, and revealed to the father the full particulars regarding the duel.

Hardly had the party left the little glade,

while the noise of their footsteps still rung through the dim aisles of the forest, when, from a clump of bushes that grew on the edge of the little opening, rose the tall figure of the old Indian chief, who bore on his breast the strange blazon of a winged whale.

With noiseless step the Indian stole into the center of the glade and listened for a moment to the sounds of the footsteps fast dying away in the distance. Then he turned to the north and beckoned as if inviting some one to come forth from the forest.

The chief stood in the center of the glade motionless.

"Let my white brother come forth; the eye of the red chief is as keen as the eye of the hawk. He sees the white-skin where he hides among the leaves. The red warrior is a friend," the Indian said, gravely.

Then from the bushes that had concealed him, Andrews rose and advanced into the glade, an expression of wonder upon his shrewd face.

"You must have regular gimlet eyes," the Yankee exclaimed.

"The chief's eyes sharp—see much."

"That's so, by hooker!" Andrews said.

"My white brother is a friend to red-white-man?" and the chief pointed after Rupert.

"Well, I guess I am. I'd do almost any thing to get him out of this pesky scrape."

"Red-man friend to young white brave; help him get out, maybe."

"Injun, you're a brick!" cried Andrews, warmly. "I'm with you in any speculation of that kind; stick to you tighter than a sick kitten to a hot fireplace!"

"The Snake-with-three-tails is a great chief of the Chickasaw nation!" said the Indian, proudly.

"What a name to lug around," murmured Andrews, in wonder.

"Let white-skin come with red-man—follow the long-rifles through the forest, like the wolves follow the deer. Not fight much but think a good deal."

"Go ahead, chief!" cried Andrews.

Cautiously through the thicket the strange allies proceeded. Carefully they tracked the Spaniards and their prisoner until they entered the town.

The appearance of the soldiers with their prisoner in the streets of Pensacola created no little excitement, which was not in the least diminished when it was whispered around that the American stranger who had called himself Rupert Vane was, in reality, the dreaded pirate, Lafitte, the terror of the gulf.

The prisoner was conveyed to the guard-house attached to the fort, and there placed in a chamber on the ground floor, whose heavily barred window seemed to forbid all thought of escape.

A sentry kept watch without the only door that gave entrance to the room.

No word had passed between Rupert and his captors since they had left the little glade that had witnessed his capture. Silently the sailor had entered his prison door, silently beheld it close upon him, shutting out the bright world and the freedom that he had loved so well.

The sun went down, and the evening came. As the twilight deepened, a soldier entered the room of the prisoner, bringing in his supper. The soldier grinned knowingly as he placed the coarse food before the captive.

Rupert saw that the man was the Spaniard who had attempted his life in the forest—Roque Vase.

"How are you, comrade?" cried the soldier, bluntly. "They've clipped your wings at last, haven't they? I little thought when I had the tussle with you in the forest that you were Lafitte."

In spite of the danger of his position, Rupert laughed.

"So you would not have troubled me if you had known that I was the pirate, eh?"

"No, by the Saints! I have too much respect for such a noble profession!" Roque cried.

"On the principle that dog won't eat dog?"

"Exactly! I wish that my wine may be my poison, if I would have lifted a finger against you, if I had only known who you was. But you're all right; they can't keep you here."

"Can't they?" The sailor wondered what was to aid him in his desperate stratagem.

"No, of course not! You know," said Roque, mysteriously, approaching Rupert as he spoke, and glancing around him nervously, "that he'll come when you call him, and take you out of this, though the walls were fifty times stronger than they are, and all the Spanish army guarded the prison instead of a single battalion!" cried Roque, in a cautious tone.

"Him?" said Rupert, in surprise; "whom do you mean?"

"Why, you know well enough!" Roque exclaimed, impatiently. "The same one that saved you in the bayou, the other night, when we chased you down the bay. I knew what would happen the moment we turned into the bayou. I wouldn't have rowed a stroke, but Captain Estevan put a pistol to my head and threatened to blow out my brains if I refused. I knew evil would come of it. That was a most horrible monster that came out of the water after me. I was never so frightened before in all my life. I say, what did you have to pay him?" asked the soldier, mysteriously.

"Him?"

"Yes; the gentleman in black down below—horns and tail, you know."

Rupert guessed the idea in the mind of the soldier.

"Satan you mean, eh?"

"Yes, exactly," and Roque glanced nervously around him as he spoke, as though he expected to see his Satanic majesty spring forward from some dark corner.

"You think, then, that I am in league with the powers of darkness?"

"Yes, of course; I know you are. That's the reason why no Spanish, English or American frigate has ever been able to capture you or your vessel. I've heard the sailors tell all about it. When your vessel is surrounded by the enemy, and no way of escape open to you, you just call on him!"

and the soldier pointed downward as he spoke—"and just as soon as you do that, a heavy fog comes up that hides everything from sight, and when the fog lifts, your enemies can just see the tops of your spars sinking in the horizon."

"And you believe all this?" asked Rupert, a strange smile upon his face.

"Believe it?" cried Roque. "I know it!"

"You think Satan aids me?"

"I know he does! Why, the moment I found out that you were Lafitte, I told my comrades that you couldn't be kept here. I bet a bottle of wine that when we came to look for you in the morning, that you'd be gone, spirited away, and neither lock, bolt or window-bar touched."

"You have great faith in my power,"

"Didn't you raise the very fiend himself the other night out of the depths of the bayou? That's sufficient to convince me."

The sound of footsteps approaching the door made the soldier beat a hasty retreat. As he opened the door, he found himself face to face with the commandante, who bore a small lantern in his hand, for the entryway and the room of the prisoner were growing darker and darker each instant, as the twilight deepened into the gloom of night.

"Carrying the prisoner his supper," said Roque, saluting, and discreetly retiring. The commandante closed the door after the soldier, carefully, placed the lantern upon the table, and then looked long and earnestly into the face of Rupert.

The sailor waited for the Spaniard to speak.

"How like! how like!" the aged officer murmured, lowly. Even the quick ear of the sailor did not catch the meaning of the muttered exclamation.

"I suppose you wonder at my visit," the commandante said at length, slowly.

"No; I wait to hear its purpose."

"You realize that you are fully in my power?"

"For the present, yes; for the future, no."

"You have hope, then, that you will escape?"

"When I die, hope will die, too; not till then."

"You are aware that your life is forfeit to the laws. Were I to order out a file of soldiers, and have you shot on the instant, no human power could punish me for the act. I am supreme in command, here in Pensacola. You are an outlaw; a price is upon your head. The death of Lafitte would be hailed by the world with joy."

"Why do you visit a helpless prisoner in his dungeon to tell him of his doom?" the sailor asked, scornfully. "Is it because you wish to gloat over your triumph? You say that no earthly power can punish you for my death. You are wrong. On the blue waters rides a staunch brigantine that flies my flag at its peak. On her deck a hundred brave men—not one of whom but would willingly face a sea of fire to avenge the death of the leader who so often has led them on to victory. Improve the chance that fortune has placed within your grip; call out your file of soldiers, let their bullets pierce my heart, and give my body to its last resting-place; within four and twenty hours after, Pensacola, no more a city, but a heap of smoking ruins, will attest the vengeance of the men who called Red Rupert their captain, and will not rest easy until they have avenged his murder."

There was silence in the prison-cell for a moment after the sailor's bold speech.

"You love my ward, Isabel?" the commandante questioned, at length.

"Yes," Rupert replied, fearlessly.

"Listen to me; I will free you from this place on three conditions," the Spaniard said, slowly.

"And what are the three conditions?" Rupert asked.

"Will you not consent without knowing the conditions? Surely life is worth all else in the world."

"We trifle with time; speak out or leave me!" cried the sailor, impatiently. "I will make no blindfold bargain."

Be it so. The first condition is that you will seek the life of my son, Captain Estevan."

"That I can readily agree to," said Rupert, scornfully. "He attempted my life; in return I placed a mark upon him that he will carry to his dying day. He will never look in the glass without remembering the day when he met Red Rupert, sword in hand, in the forest glade."

"The second condition is that you will give up all thoughts of Isabel Marina."

"Give up Isabel?" cried the sailor, starting while the hot blood leaped into his face. "Yes, give her up forever; never think more of her."

"And if I refuse?"

"Death is your fate."

"The third condition?"

"That you leave the city of Pensacola at once and never again set foot within its walls. The world is wide. This city is not the garden spot of all the world. The condition is an easy one," the Spaniard said, gravely.

"And if I refuse to accede to one or all of these three conditions?" Rupert asked.

"One fate alone: death!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 57.)

In the Web:

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEART AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER XII.

IN A DISTANT LAND.

THREE months have elapsed since the occurrence of the incidents recorded in our previous chapter. A warm May day is drawing to a close. During the early morning hours the rain fell in great cool drops upon the parched roofs and in the dusty streets of Vera Cruz, but, about noon, the clouds rolled away to the eastward and the sun blazed out again, turning the whitish mud of the narrow streets into dust, and causing the pedestrians to seek the shady sides of the streets to avoid its fierce beams.

Now, however, the heat is less oppressive, and the shadows of the houses are growing long and reaching far. At one end of a long Plaza stands an old man, dressed in the garb of a citizen of the United States. He is weary and travel-stained, and his long white hair falls upon his neck, and straggles in tangled skeins over his shoulders. As we look at him closely we notice there is something familiar about his face, and now, when he lifts up his palm-leaf hat and shades his eyes as he gazes toward the setting sun, we catch a better view of his sun-browned features, and recognize, at once, Robert Maynard.

He has searched all over Tampico; has haunted the most sacred precincts of the capital of Mexico; has walked miles upon miles by day and by night, until now his funds are low. He can not follow the almost indistinct trail much further. He is growing anxious about his home and the poor, half-crazed wife, who, away off by the green shore of the Cumberland, awaits, in pain and tears, his coming.

"I can't go further," he exclaimed. "My heart and feet both fail me, and, but for my poor, loving Sybil, I could lay down in this strange land and dream the dream of death and forgetfulness. Oh! if I could but forget—if I could refuse to think, even for an hour—what a relief it would be; what joy it would give me!"

The tears were creeping into the corners of his deep-blue eyes; but, dashing them away, he looked upward and repeated: "My trust is in Thee, oh, my God; you will not forsake a miserable wretch like me in my sorest need!"

Having said this, he bent his steps toward a church, which stood upon an elevation close by, intending to go in and join the worshippers.

As he took the path leading up to the house of prayer, his eye caught sight of a girl in form but a short distance ahead. He had surely seen that form before! His heart almost stopped beating. It looked wonderfully like the form of his lost darling! The face was concealed by the thick folds of a dark veil, and he could do nothing but follow her patiently and await the moment when she would throw aside the meshes of her veil and reveal the hidden face.

She passed the church, and followed the long, white, dusty road which led to the cemetery of San Madeline.

He never lost sight of her, however, and when she entered the silent city, where only the dead dwell, he was close behind.

Seemed to be familiar with the place, for she picked her way among the graves with a directness that showed she had some special object in her visit. Presently, she stopped before a grave, almost hid in flowers, and falling upon her knees, she burst into tears, exclaiming, between her sobs:

"Oh, my poor, dead husband, why don't you speak to me—why don't you speak to me, I'm so lonely!"

He recognized the voice at once; it was music to his eager ears, and, unable to repress his speech longer, he opened his arms wide, and cried, in a faltering voice:

"Tillie Maynard, my child! my darling! have I found you at last?"

She threw back her veil and looked up; then, screaming and fainting, she tottered forward, and fell into the outstretched arms.

"Oh, Tillie, my child! my child! is this really you?" he cried, smoothing back her hair from her pure brow, and kissing her flushed cheek again and again.

She did not answer; she could not speak; her new joy was too great; but she crept closer to his warm breast and nestled her head there, where it had often lain before in the old days, which now appeared so very, very far away indeed.

After a few moments she managed to ask where he had come from, and what had brought him to Vera Cruz.

"I came after you, my child. All these months, since you left us, I have searched for you. I have walked the streets of Nashville, of Louisville, of St. Louis, by night and by day, until, at last, despairing, I reached New Orleans. There I learned of your whereabouts and of the great misfortune that had overtaken you."

"You heard, then, of Mark's death?"

"Of his death," replied the old man, bitterly; "no, I wish to Heaven I had! 'Oh, Tillie, Tillie, how could you leave your poor father and mother, who thought the world of you, for such a wretch as Blanchard?'"

Tillie Maynard slipped out of his arms, and, while her face took on an ashen hue, she said, very solemnly:

"Father, I know I have done very wrong, and that he was too proud to ask your consent, but he was my husband, and that, if not this grave, should protect his memory from insult."

She looked strangely beautiful as she stood there, in the glare of the yellow sunset, her hair rippling over her shoulders with the sunbeams glinting through the meshes, and her face wearing a majestic loveliness impossible to paint.

The old man hesitated to speak. He knew now how deep his revelation must cut into a tender womanly heart; he realized how ardent was the love a villain had awoke in the impressionable heart of his child, and he knew how bitter the words he was forced to utter would sound on her ears.

"Tillie," he began, in a kindly, compassionate way, "that grave is hollow; your husband is living."

"My husband living?" she repeated. "You are surely crazy, father. You are not rational, or else you have been cruelly deceived."

"Not at all, my poor child," he said. "Tis you who have been deceived, basely deceived, for, at this very moment Mark Blanchard is in New Orleans, preparing for his marriage with a young lady named Davenant."

If her face had been ashen before, now it assumed a deathly pallor; her eyes stared with a parched gaze into the speaker's face; she placed her hands over her ears to shut out this monstrous story, and, without knowing exactly what she said, she asked, in a hoarse whisper:

"Who told you this?"

He told her the whole story then, word by word, as he had heard it from Magdalen's lips, and she listened patiently, silently, all the while growing numb with a pain she had never felt before. When he had finished, she gazed down upon the flower-strewn mound an instant, and then exclaimed: "Oh, Father in Heaven! I wish he was buried there, and I with him. But this—this desertion, this being cast off, this is, oh! so horrible! I feel it is breaking my poor heart at last."

With a wail that sounded dismal in that old churchyard, and which rung out along the hill-tops like unearthly music, she fell forward upon her face.

Robert Maynard stooped down and picked her up hastily; but when she spoke again it was incoherently; the poor young wife was a raving maniac.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MEETING.

WHEN Robert Maynard discovered the condition of his daughter he was overwhelmed with a nameless grief—a grief so deep, so terrible, as to almost unseat his own reason. But, he had now a mission to perform which must take precedence over every other consideration; he must take a tender care of poor Tillie, and he must also have vengeance on the head of her betrayer.

It was late—long after dark—when father and daughter wandered into the great hotel of San Salvador in Vera Cruz. He had only a few dollars, but this was ample to procure a bed and breakfast for the twain; after that, Providence would have to be relied upon.

Robert Maynard led his daughter into the large parlor of the hotel. Seating her there he whispered:

"Sit there, Tillie dearest, until I go and find the landlord. Don't move now."

There was little need to add this admonition, for she heard him not; but sat gazing at the flowers in the carpet with a sad and wistful gaze.

A young man sat on the opposite side of the apartment reading a book of travels, but he paid no attention to either Tillie or her father until the former said, slowly and solemnly:

"These are the roses I planted on Mark Blanchard's grave—poor Mark!"

As this name dropped from her lips the young man started, and turned his eyes upon Tillie.

With the light streaming full upon his handsome face he recognized in him an old acquaintance—Major Cecil.

He was a trifle paler, and a little more sedate than when we last saw him, and his general appearance gave token that he yet was suffering keenly from his great disappointment.

"My young lady, are you a friend of Mark Blanchard?" he asked, deferentially.

She looked up quickly, and after scanning Cecil's face, she replied:

"Oh, yes; he was mine—he was my own Mark. But that was before he died," she added, her lips twitching with agony, and her eyes dimming with tears.

Major Cecil thought he discovered something strange about her manner, but her words had awakened a curiosity within him, and he could not help asking her, even at the risk of being deemed impertinent, where she had met Mr. Blanchard, and what led her to suppose that he was dead?

"I don't know," she said, in response. "I think I met him years ago—oh, so many years ago—and then he went and died and made me so miserable." She was crying again—crying in a doleful way—and rocking to and fro hopelessly and despairing.

Cecil knew now that her reason was gone; that he was conversing with a maniac, and so he spoke no more until her father returned, when he said:

"Your daughter is suffering, I see, from an affection of the brain."

"Yes," was the answer, "but I hope, with a little rest and quiet, she will be restored."

"May I ask if her condition is the result of a shock, or has this gradually grown upon her?"

"She has just heard a piece of bad news, and it has upset her reason for the time being."

"Indeed! I am very sorry," returned Cecil, "and if I can be of any service to you I hope you will command me. You are from the United States, I perceive, and as I hail from there myself, you should have no hesitancy in accepting assistance from a countryman."

This liberal

A SPRING CAROL—Acrostic.

BY C. R. D.

Silvery sweet the robin is singing,
As, swaying, she sits in the old linden tree,
Tenderly green the young grass is springing
Under the hedges and on the brown lea.
Rills so long silent, 'neath fetters of snow,
Down to the sounding sea murmuring go;
Anemones lift up their sweet faces pale,
Yellow the cowslip blooms down in the swale.
Softly the swallows coo under the eaves,
The wind stirs the mosses where violets grow,
And sweet daisies nestling in beds of green leaves
Raise up, toward the sun, their bosoms of snow.
Joy-bells are tinkling in each waving tree,
Oh, heart-broken mourner, for you and for me,
Up to the "Courts Above," each gladsome hour,
Rise an anthem from each tiny flower.
Now fades the rose light from out the western sky,
And while day is dying let me breathe this fervent
prayer:
"Lord, lead Thou my erring feet toward the
golden 'Over There.'"

A Woman's Wiles.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

A LARGE, elegantly-furnished parlor, with five French windows opening on a wide veranda, where the brightest of moonlight was shining in one unbroken banner.

A party of merry young people grouped in the open windows, on the flight of steps; and Octavian Morton, the gayest, prettiest, brightest of them all, flirting with Max Maxwell on the lawn just in front of the house.

She was just the sort of a girl to enjoy a flirtation, and Mr. Maxwell seemed to think her a very delightful specimen of coquetry, judging from the glances he bestowed upon her, and the low, melodious inflections he gave his voice.

They made a splendid-looking couple, out there in the moonlight, on the emerald-green lawn, and Mamie Rosenberg, as she watched them from under her drooping eyelids, with that uncomfortable distress somewhere about her, could have described Max Maxwell as none but a jealous, loving girl could have done.

There was not much wonder that Mamie Rosenberg had, in common with all the rest of "the girls," fallen in love with Mr. Maxwell's handsome face, fine figure and stylish air; although none of them was as deeply in love as poor, pretty little Mamie, who had not the slightest idea how lovely were the velvety-brown eyes and the incarnadine on her cheeks; or how much Mr. Maxwell admired her short, boyish hair that waved in thick tendrils from brow to neck; and who was all the time wishing she was as stately and stylish as Miss Octavian Morton from New York, so that Mr. Maxwell would, possibly, care for her as he did for the beauty.

Perhaps conscious of Mamie's half-sad scrutiny, Octavian was laughing and talking in her most brilliant way with handsome Max Maxwell, whose dark violet eyes were always laughing in Octavian's own, and whose thick amber mustache was in alarmingly close proximity—at times—with a pretty, dimpled hand.

Now, that's simply nonsensical, Mr. Maxwell. As if these screeches or fondle-tellers, or whatever they are, can reveal the sealed events of the future! No, you can't convince me."

Her incredulous laugh floated gayly out on the still air.

"But, I said already several predictions have come to pass—shall I tell you one of them?"

He looked up at Octavian—he had flung himself lazily on the grass, resting his elbow on the ground and his head on his hand—with a smile in his eyes that made her heart throb joyously.

"I wish you would—if only to prove what you've said, you know."

"I was to meet the most lovely of women; she would return the love I offered her—Octavian, my darling, will the prophesy prove true?"

His eyes were not laughing now; they were serious and tender, and the girl blushed under their gaze.

"If you wish it to be true—"

"Then you love me? for I have loved you ever since the day I saw you."

And through the dimming, paling moonlight, Mamie Rosenberg, wondering why he talked so long and so low to Octavian Morton, never dreamed it was a betrothal!

But when she crept away to bed that night, she knew it, and for the heartache she felt, sleep fled her eyes those long hours.

And Max Maxwell, when he had kissed Octavian good-night, paced the long piazza, proud and happy, and entirely forgetting that the lines of his future life had also read him the fate of being jilted by her whom he loved.

But he chose to forget that; he could not, would not, believe that his peerless Octavian was a girl to do such a thing; so he dreamed his dream; while Mamie Rosenberg cried and listened for his footsteps, and Octavian Morton wondered, as she did up her hair in crimping-pins, whether he was rich or not?

Eight years! a wide gulf, with its currents of joys, of sorrows, that had left unmistakable impressions on the three people of whom I am relating their love life.

Perhaps Mrs. Justin—Mrs. Octavian Justin—the elegant widow, who resided in her mansion on Lexington avenue, was the least changed in personage and the most in condition of them all.

She had jilted Max Maxwell, and married a wealthy old man, who had died three years back and left her very rich.

She was still blooming, still stately and gracious, and in love with Max Maxwell still, although seven years had gone by since she had seen him.

And little Mamie Rosenberg! time and fortune had played strange freaks with her; and, at twenty, she was just a little faded and aged, for she was working for her living nowadays; a happy, contented little woman, who had a smile for every one, and whose lips were always murmuring some graceful song while her busy fingers flew.

She often thought of Mr. Maxwell, in her own, old-time, modest way, wondering if he had married Octavian Morton, and if she loved him?

She never had known how it had happened; her path in life had been so different these late years, and she and Octavian never met.

Of them all Max Maxwell was the most changed—and I think it was for the better—outwardly, surely, for these eight long years had added a proud strength to his features and figure; his eyes were deeper, keener; his mouth, under that same thick amber mustache Mamie Rosenberg had so admired, was sterner and more willful, to be sure, but the same tender smile could light up all

his grand, immobile face as brightly at thirty-two as at twenty-four.

So he came back from his long travels, and among the very first cards he received was one bearing the name of "Mrs. Gustavus Justin." His lips curled, but he thought he might as well go and show her how utterly he disregarded her.

A very handsome man he was, and when Octavian came eagerly across her drawing-room to meet him, she felt the old love throb through her veins as it had that warm moonlight night, eight years and more ago!

And he?

Well, he thought what a superb woman Mrs. Justin had grown to be—that was all!

"Max, I am so glad to see you! Can it be possible you are so little changed?"

She looked at him in an eager sort of way that she hardly intended.

"Time has not made so many changes as circumstances, Mrs. Justin. You are looking but very little older than when I saw you last."

So he referred to it, and so carelessly, and called her "Mrs. Justin," too!

Octavian's cheeks burned; would he scorn her now, as she had scorned him? If she had dared, she would have gone and put her arms around his neck and kissed him, only it would not have been quite the thing.

Was there any one else occupying his heart?

She endeavored to find out.

"Have you seen any of our old friends lately?" she asked, very sweetly.

"No; but I wish I could. Who are living in the city? Do you ever come across that pretty little Miss Rosenberg nowadays?"

Mrs. Justin's lip curled.

"No; my circle of acquaintance does not include hair-workers."

She felt a jealousy even at his simple compliment; she began to hate Mamie Rosenberg that moment; she would have hated any other woman as well.

So Mr. Maxwell went away, with a reluctant promise to come again; and Octavian Justin called her carriage to go to the little rural homestead where Mamie Rosenberg lived, and worked for Madame Paulo, who had her rooms in the city; not such a very long distance out was the little one-story cot, for Mamie walked it every day.

So Mrs. Justin met Mamie at the outer gate; the girl all surprise at the meeting, the lady all condescending welcome.

"You will come back with me, certainly, Mamie? I have so much to talk about, and

tended to be a glorious success, and Octavian, radiant in ruby-hued velvet and sparkling gems, descended to her parlors that night, resolved to bring Max Maxwell to her feet before the morning stars shone. He would come, she knew, for he had called that very day to tell her; so she watched the door with ill-concealed anxiety, and a rich carmine glow on her cheeks.

Then, of a sudden, she saw him—tall, elegant, and stern—and her eyes flashed a joyous welcome.

"Mrs. Justin—my wife, Mrs. Maxwell!"

A swift glance—a sudden, spasmodic gasping for breath—and she bowed to Mamie Rosenberg.

"There is no need to explain, Mrs. Justin; suffice it I heard all you said, and all she said, a week ago to-day. I have only to thank you for leading me to her. Shall we go now, Mamie?"

And Octavian watched them away with a bitter, bitter heart-ache.

Hoodwinked:

OR,

DEAD AND ALIVE.

A Tale of Man's Perfidy and Woman's Faith.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "RALPH HAMON, THE CHEMIST," "THE WARNING ARROW," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

SARAH MARKS' STORY.

"My name is Sarah Marks," she began, her tone visibly much weaker than ever, "thirty-one years ago I obtained, through the kind influence of many friends, a situation as nurse in the noble family of Lord Harold Blair, Earl of —, who was noble in character, as he was in name—generous to all, and watchful of the comfort of the lowest menial in his employ. His wife, the gentle Countess Marie—oh! how I loved her!—your mother, was as mild, as sweet as an angel, beloved by every one.

"I was called to nurse their new-born babe; and what a little jewel I thought it was, too! It was you, young man—*you*. How careful I was of you! How I watched your every movement lest you should be hurt in some way! I was wrapped up in you. I idolized you; and when I took you in my arms, I was a child myself, for I used to

part of the city—it was here, in London—he met a friend. Friend! It was an enemy, a very devil, with his true nature concealed, and smiling face, and mild-toned voice substituted. This man, this wretch, had intended to meet Lord Harold, and immediately began a prelude of apologies for expressing regrets at a certain occurrence which had recently come under his notice; and to which the earl gave wondering and confused ear. He demanded of the other to speak out his say without further hesitation. But this pretended friend was cunning. He was careful in playing his part. And when he at last explained, your father's mind was shocked, he quivered in dumb amazement, and, finally, was about to strike to the earth the devil who bore him such hellish news; but the latter, with oily speech, protected himself against the just indignation of the insulted husband. In addition, he volunteered to prove his assertions.

"Consenting, in the end, to his treacherous friend's proposal, the earl repaired, with his fiend companion, in great haste, back to his mansion. They did not enter the house, but went around to the rear, into the garden, on which fronted the windows of the countess' boudoir.

"What did they see? It was enough to palsy the very heart-beats of the most confiding man who ever shared prosperity and affliction with woman! There, seated at the window, which was open, was the earl's steward. He was leisurely smoking a cigar, and cooling himself with a fan, and, at the moment, seeming to converse with another occupant of the room, who could be no other than the countess.

"The steward did not appear to see them, and they hurriedly drew back within a clump of shrubbery, and watched. Presently the steward started up, cast aside his cigar and fan, and exclaimed, while the words were borne distinctly to their ears: 'Marie, you are mine! You say you are only mine? Then, indeed, this is bliss!' and he stepped from their sight, as if to embrace her to whom he addressed himself. The earl staggered; he burned to lay hands upon the foul being who dared invade the sanctity of his love for the countess; but he tottered weakly and sunk, overcome, to the sward. When he recovered, he was alone. He looked up at the window, where had been enacted the scene to blast all faith in one who had held his loftiest confidence. The sash was closed. No vestige remained of the dreadful disclosure forced upon him.



A WOMAN'S WILES.

it's only to-day I discovered your whereabouts."

Her lying lips were wreathed in smiles that well concealed the jealousy in her heart; and Mamie, to whom an hour's respite would be a royal treat, went home to Mrs. Justin's elegant house.

Octavian would not talk except on gay, commonplace subjects all that swift ride home; and it was only when she and Mamie stood in her own back drawing-room that she dropped her mask, and turned almost fiercely upon puzzled Mamie.

"I said I wished to speak with you," she said, almost sharply, as those eyes—"velvety-brown," she had heard them called—turned inquiringly up. "Do you remember Max Maxwell?"

The abrupt question brought the blood to Mamie's cheeks; did she ever forget him?

"Very good," went on Octavian, sharply. "I see you do. Well, he has returned, and, from what I can ascertain, he intends marrying—*me*. Now, Mamie Rosenberg, I have heard from your shop associates that you are continually talking about this gentleman, in the most familiar—"

Mamie jumped from her chair, her face stern and glowing.

"That is not so, and whoever told you told a falsehood. I never have mentioned his name to a soul since—since you used him so scandalously. As to his being home, I never knew of it until this moment."

"Then you think I used him badly, do you?"

"Do not ask me—I only know I would not have done it—because I—"

She paused abruptly, then the tears rushed to her eyes.

"Oh, don't be afraid or ashamed to say you are in love with him."

Mrs. Justin's sarcasm had its effect on Mamie, for the words came leaping unguarded from her lips.

"I will say it—I am neither afraid or ashamed to acknowledge that I do love Max Maxwell, and have loved him these years."

Then she went away from the elegant house; not to the place of business—her heart was too full for that—but to her little cottage she called home.

And a second or so after, Max Maxwell emerged from Mrs. Justin's door, whither he had gone in but a moment after Mamie, and followed her light, fleet footsteps.

His face was wearing its tenderest beauty, and a rare smile was playing under that amber mustache when he tapped on the door of Mamie Rosenberg's room.

Mrs. Gustavus Justin's reception was in-

laugh, and sing, and play, trying to get a crow from your cherub lips. And why was this? Why were you so precious to me?

"I obtained, for my carefulness, the endless thanks of your perfect mother. And this is why I gave you such attention. I was married at the time, though nobody knew it, to a nice young man, who only waited for better times, better prospects, when we should proclaim our secret to the world, and live happily together, as only those can live who love each other fondly. God! the time never came for us to do that. The bright future we had looked forward to, faded like a mist before the winds, and left dark clouds before the sun, left me a widow, helpless. But wait, and I'll speak of that presently."

"My care of you was rewarded well by the earl and the countess; and the knowledge that I was pleasing them, besides expectations of the day when my husband should take me to him openly, made my life a happy one. Oh! how happy! But I said it faded. Listen. The earl was possessed of a notion to prick your name in India ink upon your arm, and spoke of it to your mother. But she would not listen to it; so he said no more about it, though he did not give up the idea. He did it. He placed your name upon the inner part of your arm, near the shoulder, besides, his 'coat-of-arms.' I was the only one, save himself, who knew it—where it is now. There it has staid fast, indelible. Your mother never found it out, nor anybody else."

"How happy were your father and mother in their only pet! How happy was I in pleasing them! But there came a shadow. Like a foggy shroud, wrought by Satan, it came!"

"No purer woman than the countess ever graced a man's home. Yet, see what envy did. See what accursed jealousy and masked enmity perfected in the garb of hypocritical friendship. The countess had foes—sly, subtle, scheming foes—who sought to ruin her fair name, and rob her of a fond husband's love. They were successful. And these enemies were at court; they visited her house; partook of her hospitality; they smiled before, and scandalized behind her; they plotted injury to her, and accomplished it!"

"It was done through a steward of the earl's—a handsome man, with a black, devilish heart. This man was hired by gold, to aid in the base designs upon the countess. Hear, now, how straight the plot was carried out."

"The earl was called away from his home, one day, on private business, and his wife was alone, as he knew. At a distant

His reason must have been dethroned, in part, for I remember when he came into the house, he appeared like one bereft of his senses.

"He retired to his room and locked himself in; and after a while, a servant was summoned, to whom he handed a note for the countess. I was that servant. I went to the rooms of my mistress, and found her reclining upon a sofa, just awakening from what, both she and I always thought, a natural slumber, and in which belief she died. I gave her the note. She read it. She read it twice, thrice; then rubbed her eyes, as if she was not fully aroused from sleep, and did not read aright; and the next moment, with a painful cry, swooned. It was the note that caused it; and these were the words it contained—they are stamped on my memory in letters of fire:

"Countess Marie, wife of Harold, Lord Blair, Earl of —."

"MAMIE!—Accursed be the hour in which the words of a minister created us man and wife. I have lived in foolish blindness—adored at the shrine of a dissembling woman, whose lips, guileless, yet are fraught with guile concealed beneath the charm of a studied piety and chasteness. You, the once pure angel who taught me the lesson of a husband's honor for his wife, are unmasked in all your guilty inconstancy; and while my pen shapes these lines, no fluttering heart, sick-lover brain is mine, but a tortuous cunningness grasps my faculties, and a stern realization of your infidelity faces me. I have witnessed your familiarities with my steward this day, while you imagined me well removed from the chance of penetrating your actions. Therefore, understand me; your further presence is a disgrace to the honorable name I bestowed in marriage. Let your departure from my house be at once; or I shall abandon it, and leave you to the sole companionship of your partner in this miserable crime."

"HAROLD, LORD BLAIR, EARL OF —."

"No wonder she swooned! No wonder her features were as if carved from whitest marble! Was it not enough to kill her? Was it not enough to crush the very soul of any woman who was unconscious of guilt or wrong? The countess was such a one. She was as pure as woman ever was! The blow was so heavy, so unexpected, that I feared she would go mad. I had never seen her grieve before. She moaned, and cried, and sobbed; and to me, who stood mutely there, protested that she was innocent. I had snatched up the note from the floor, where it fell, read it, and thrust it into my bosom, where I kept it ever afterward. I believed she was innocent; I knew she was innocent; and I joined my pleading and entreaties to hers when she asked her husband for an interview. But all begging was useless. He was stern, cold-hearted, refused

to listen, said he had 'seen enough to satisfy him,' and repeated his intention to leave the house, if she did not do so. He never wished to see her face again.

"After a time, she went. She had no relatives—was the last of a noble family. But she had a comfortable annuity. I went with her. With tears in her eyes, she asked me to bring the babe—her dear child—*you*. I did this. I stole it from its crib, and we departed together. But I should have thought over it more than I did. I did not reflect that Lord Harold, upon missing the babe, would demand it, and, if his supposed guilty wife refused to give it up, would then carry the case before the courts, thus exposing the whole affair. I knew my mistress would shrink from open calumny; and, as I saw how attached she was to her little one, I had not the heart to take it away from her, and place it back again. Yet, I loved her! Something had to be done. Hear the sacrifice I made!

"A plan suggested itself to me which I dismissed at first, but, at length, decided to adopt. I saw my husband and told him all that had happened, and the embarrassment I was in. He agreed to do as I proposed. Our child, whom we had had, privately, christened 'Harrison,' was placed in the crib which had contained the true child of the earl. As the ages of the babes were nearly alike, I hoped Lord Harold might not find out the deception. And he didn't."

"But, before I parted with my own child, I had its name pricked upon its arm—the left arm—near the shoulder, in small letters—'Harrison Gregor.' That was the name of my husband—though I haven't used it for many years; in fact, it was never known that I was married at all, except by some near relations of my husband. On the other arm, and in a like place, I had pricked in still smaller letters—'Nor Victor Hassan B.' These two marks were never noticed by future nurses—I wonder at it!—and, perhaps, no one save Harrison to this day knows they are there. My son, Harrison, now grown to a man, is called Lord Harrison, instead of Lord Victor Hassan. I'll tell you, in a word, how that happened. It was a strange coincidence. Your father wished to destroy all relic of her whom he believed unfaithful, and to that end, had his supposed child's name changed, as he thought. 'Harrison' had become a popular name about then, and, as I said, through a strange coincidence, he had it altered, from Victor Hassan to Harrison, which was really its name anyhow. So the child lived. So it grew up. Always called Harrison after that—Lord Harrison Blair."

"I had hoped that every thing might, at some time be arranged happily, and the separated man and wife be rejoined. But a chain of events quickly ensued, which destroyed all such anticipations."

"I learned the vile plot that had ruined the lives of two beings, through the steward himself. I found him, one day, in a dirty shanty—that was what he had got down to—dying; and he confessed to the part he had acted. He had received a thousand pounds for his villainy, and fled to France as soon as he performed his share of the hellish scheme. He had administered a drug to the countess, and while she was insensible, gained access to her boudoir, where he seated himself to await the appearance of the earl, in the garden. This plan had been well laid. He was on the alert; he saw when Lord Harold stood there, beneath the windows, and at the fixed moment uttered the words which so cut the husband's heart."

"But I received this information too late! When I returned to my home, I found my mistress *dead*! Her woe, caused through the unjust charges against her honor, and sorrow at the estrangement from one who she *knew* was deceived, had so preyed upon her that she died suddenly, a broken-hearted wife. There was no will; nor were there any surviving relatives; every thing of hers was seized by the crown, with the approval of the earl; and the money she left went to charitable purposes. I was without a home, and had the care of the babe, *you*; for, it was well known that, in case any thing happened to my mistress, I should take care of her child."

"I took you and went to a house where lived some relatives of my husband's, and there I was greeted by terrible news—'Water! water! give me water!' she gasped tremblingly the pitcher that Victor held ready."

Satisfying her thirst, and appearing relieved of the lump which choked her throat, she paused for a few seconds to regain breath."

"The young man was impatient. He forgot her low condition, her failing strength; he considered but one thing—he was listening to a history of his birth, which had always been a mystery to him; and the brief stop in her recital chafed upon his eagerness."

"Go on, Sarah Marks; go on!" he urged. "Tell me the rest. In Heaven's name, speak!"

CHAPTER XX.

A 'STUPENDOUS' CASE.

SARAH MARKS at length resumed, in a full voice:

"I said I was met by terrible news. My husband was addicted to drink. But this never marred his love for me. It proved his doom, though. While intoxicated, he had walked from a bridge into the Thames, and was drowned. By a lucky chance, his body was found by persons who knew and recognized him, and it was brought to his relatives. Although this nearly killed me, I did not forget my charge, the babe, *you*, in all my sorrow. You were closely on two years old then, and behaved nicely; and I even took you to the funeral of my husband."

"The time flew by. I lived off of the money I had saved while employed in the services of the countess. This small fund grew smaller, until it dwindled down to almost nothing; when, one day, my sister Madge came to see me—I had a sister, but I hardly ever saw her, because she lived away at the further end of the city—and she said she was going to America. I was almost a beggar then, and I could not get any thing to do, so I concluded I must part with you. You were then about three years of age. I asked her if she would take you with her, and she agreed. I took you to her on ship-board, just before they set sail; and I told Madge who you were, and all about every thing. I told her to be sure and pin a paper to your garments, with your name written on it, if she ever got clear of you."

"She took you and went to America. After that I never saw you, till this night, and then I knew you right away, by your remarkable resemblance to your mother, and by those two small dark moles on each side of your forehead. Madge came back again

soon, and I saw her once—it was nearly twenty years ago. Maybe she has lived in London the twenty years gone; but I have never set eyes on her. My relations and friends, one by one, all died, or went away, and I was left alone without money or place to support myself. To get me a livelihood, I had done a great many wrong things. I was forced to it. I continued to live on—sometimes a charity-seeker and sometimes with plenty of money. Within a few years though, even the vile existence I had accepted, failed to be of much account. I became a thief. I was too ashamed of the low reputation I had accepted for myself, to seek honest employment. Now, I am dying! I have not many more moments left for this world; and I die, repenting all my evil ways; happy in thinking of how pure I was once. I never did, would not dare, to assert my relationship with the proud Lord Hallison Blair, who lives so grandly in square St. James; I would be scoffed at, perhaps cast into prison for my boldness. But he is my son! He has his true name—'Hallison Gregor'—upon his left arm; and on his right is pricked: 'Nor Victor Hassan B.' This is all. Water! I am dying!"

She drained the pitcher to the last of its contents, and then added, hastily:

"Go! Go bring a lawyer here. Tell him to fetch pen and ink. I must sign my name to an affidavit. Be quick!"

"Where will I find one?" cried Victor, starting to his feet; "we are strangers in London. Direct me—"

"When you leave this house, turn to the left; when you go out of the alley turn again to the left; keep on a few blocks until you reach a corner house, built of brick, with railings to the steps, long windows opening on a balcony at the front, and lighted vestibule. One of a firm of lawyers lives there. I am sure you'll find him in. Bring him to me. I must finish this. It is the hand of God!"

Victor bounded from the room, and hurried upon his errand without waiting to hear more.

When Sarah Marks and the merchant were alone, the former said:

"Look in that trunk over there and you will find some papers. I wrote them; I wrote them all. I am not the worthless being you would take me for. I have had a better education than you would think. Open the trunk and get out the writings."

Herndon did as she requested; finding, upon opening the trunk, a large roll of manuscript. A glance at it showed him that it was an affidavit, and more lengthy statement of fact to which he had listened.

"I don't know what made me write it," she continued; "but, I did it at odd times, after I had been thinking a great deal. It eased my mind to place my thoughts in words. I never dreamed it would go into the hands of the very child whom I used to nurse—to the true child of the earl! It's the hand of God. He ordained that this should come to pass before I entered His presence!"

"Woman—Sarah Marks, you have given us most valuable information! This is intelligence both pleasing and startling!"

"But it's true! It's true!" she asserted, with husky vehemence.

"I can not doubt it," he returned. "It does really seem to be a Providence which brought about this most strange meeting."

"It's true, every word of it!" repeated Sarah Marks. "I have written it all down, there, on the paper, and with my dying strength I am going to sign it. For it will be one good deed to wipe out the many wicked ones I have committed. Oh! that I could live to see again the happiness of my early life!"

"How long has the earl been dead?" inquired the merchant, still busily perusing the manuscript by the pale candle-light, though his question had no definite importance.

She answered promptly:

"It was over ten years ago. I remember the grand funeral, well."

"About two years previous to the date when my wife and I first met Hallison Blair," thought Herndon.

He devoted himself to making her as comfortable as possible, considering the lack of conveniences; for which kind attention she returned feeble thanks.

As the moments passed, she began to fear that Victor would return too late to accomplish that which she desired; but, while expressing this anxiety to Mr. Herndon, the door opened, and the young man entered, flushed with the excitement of thought, and a hasty walk. He was accompanied by not only the lawyer named by Sarah Marks, but also by an Episcopal clergyman, whom he had found with the lawyer's aid. The latter named gentleman, comprehending, at a glance, how matters stood, wheeled up the rickety table placed beside it a stool, and arranging the sheets so that they could be signed successively without delay, said:

"Now, then; there you are. All ready. Come!"

"Sign the papers, Sarah Marks, while you have strength enough left," Herndon said, assisting in raising her to the stool.

With trembling hand she dipped the pen in the ink, and, amid a profound silence, attached her signature to each of the papers; and the lawyer stood by, business-like, to dry the name as fast as written, and nodding this small, shingled head in a rapid, satisfied manner.

"There!" she exclaimed, in a whisper, when she had scratched the last letter on the last sheet, "it is done! That will prove every thing. I am going. Hold me!"

She tottered dizzily in her seat, and was near falling; but Victor caught her, and she was gently placed upon the mattress, where she lay like one in calm repose.

Suddenly the dark eyes of the dying woman opened—they were flaring, and unsteady in their gaze; and in a voice so low that they could scarce distinguish the words, she pined:

"Water! Just one more drink, and then I—I—"

Victor took up the pitcher, and would have procured the water, but the clergyman laid a detaining hand upon his arm, saying:

"Stop. It is useless. She can not live five minutes. She would be dead ere you came back. Let us pray for her," and he knelt by the tomb, ragged head, in solemn accord. The others bowed their heads, in solemn accord. When they looked up, the soul of Sarah Marks was mingling with the hosts that throng the beaten path leading to the spirit realms.

The lawyer began fumbling and shuffling the manuscripts, and immediately interested himself in the affidavit, with contracted brow and mien of gravest study. He represented a most respectable firm. The worthy minister was pleased to accept full charge of the matter in hand, and was authorized

to summon an undertaker, and see that the corpse had decent burial at a joint expense between the merchant and the young man; and, after giving him their directions, they withdrew to the main street, where they were fortunate enough to secure a cab, and returned to their boarding-house.

Ex-Superintendent Kraak had retired, and they were partially glad of it, as his presence might not have been so desirable under the existing circumstances.

They had no inclination to sleep; and the night was passed in conversation upon the singular and most wonderful developments so brought about as to seem hardly credible. Early next morning, the business card of "Messrs. Blank & Blank, Attorneys and Counsellors-at-law," was presented, and the lawyer was admitted.

A lengthy dialogue, statement, and explanation ensued, in which the lawyer was informed of Hallison Blair's apparent villainy, and that the witnesses were on hand, prepared to testify at any moment. Lawyer Blank evinced much interest, and began to take notes. It appeared to him an extraordinary case, a wonderful case—a case that was of momentous import, but crystal transparency. He entertained no doubt as to their being ably qualified to thoroughly

"oust" the Englishman, besides having him dealt severely with, according to law, for attempt at double murder.

"Not the slightest particle of a chance for him!" exclaimed the attorney, rapidly penciling off the more weighty points given him. "He'll go under like frosted cabbage in boiling water. Hem! Very queer complication, this. I read all the manuscripts last night. Haven't had a wink of sleep for about thirty-six hours. Sarah Marks will be buried to-day. I've attended to that; expense light—hum! no hurry about the cash, you know! How funny is this case, now! Our firm concedes it to be *stupendous*! We'll prove two murders on him, and a wife under false representations; we'll prove him a fraud on nobility; a son of nobody; a consummate scoundrel and outlandish liar—etc., etc., etc., and we'll have him put in jail, in prison; exile him, banish him forever—maybe hang him! Of course this shall be kept quiet until all the documents are prepared, you know—until the machinery is all well g-r-e-a-s-e-d—then we'll shove the piston-rod, open the safety-valve, turn the fire-wheel, and run our circular saw of justice through his live-oak body. See? Right in keeping it quiet, am I not?—yes? Certainly. I thought so. There you are!" His speech had been broken by short intervals, as he wrote rapidly, and now he closed his memorandum-book with a snap. Shortly thereafter he took his departure.

It was two days subsequent to the interview of Sarah Marks, when, in and by the approval and advice of their lawyer, Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan engaged rooms at the Hotel, for themselves, ex-Superintendent Kraak, and Kate, the waiting-maid.

All, however, were registered under fictitious titles, with the exception of the young man, whose name was written in the books: "Lord Victor Hassan B."

The residence of Lord Hallison Blair was but a short distance from the Hotel, and on the first day they occupied their new rooms, Victor had walked out in the direction of St. James Square, hoping to feast his eyes for a moment, if possible, upon Pauline's face. He knew she was accustomed to ride out in the afternoons; and his wish was gratified. He noticed the fine span, the elegant livery before the Englishman's house, and well knew that it was hers—

for he had been there more than once before to feast his eyes on her—the still-cherished idol—the sacred image engraven so deep in his heart that time nor effort could not erase it. He saw her driven off; and then turned his eyes upward to the windows. They rested on Doctor Gulick Brandt!

He heard the physician utter a cry, saw him reel back from view, and without waiting further, returned to the hotel, where he related the incident to Calvert Herndon.

In the same moment in which Victor Hassan was telling the merchant what he had seen, Doctor Gulick Brandt was busy perusing the page labeled "Late Arrivals," in the office, down-stairs; and having discovered Victor's name, he turned his footsteps, in hot haste, back to St. James Square, where he rejoined the Englishman—his features whitened, his whole manner one of guilty excitement.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOSEPH FLEET, S. S.

"Sir:—Please call immediately at room, —, Hotel, on account of urgent business."

"Now, who the devil can this be, who signs himself 'Lord Victor Hassan B.' and wants to see me on business?"

Thus read detective Joseph Fleet, from a small slip of paper he held in his hand; and thus he soliloquized, as he perused his brief message.

Lord Victor Hassan B. was a nobleman of whom he had not yet heard. Lord Victor Hassan B. was a personage new to his knowledge of the lights of the nobility; and he studied the scrip perplexedly.

"The best way to decide is to go and find out," he concluded. "Business, eh? It's always business with Joe Fleet. I'll see the gentleman at once," and a few minutes later, he was hurrying in the direction of the hotel.

Presenting his card, he was promptly ushered to room—where the servant announced him. Calvert Herndon and Victor Hassan were there, as if awaiting his arrival, and the detective entered with a bow.

"Good-evening, Mr. Fleet," said Victor, arising; but Fleet paused in the center of the apartment and interrupted him, saying:

"Hold on. You sent for me on business, didn't you?"

"Very good; and on business I've come. First and foremost, my name is Joseph Fleet—'Joe' for short—some call me Joe, and some call me Fleet, while others call me Joe Fleet. Therefore, you will choose one, two or all three of the titles, if you wish; but don't call me Mr. Fleet. Now then, business."

The detective was a medium-proportioned individual, with heavy black whiskers; his face was pleasant, yet expressive of determination; his eyes, small and keen, darted in every direction, reliable in word; sometimes irritable, sometimes lenient—in all his moods, shrewd and decisive; not a man to be trifled with, and a man who understood the duties of his office in the secret service.

As he spoke, he seated himself in a convenient chair, placed his elbows on the arm-rests, let his chin fall to his hands, and crossing his legs, gazed at them in a way that partially discovered his nature.

"Now, then, to our business."

Without further ceremony, Victor proceeded to lay before Fleet his whole case. He began with the first incident—his discovery of moisture upon the lips of Calvert Herndon, when the merchant lay in his coffin, in the parlor at the Home Mansion in America; and from this point, began a recital of every thing—his own near death; his being saved by the waiting-girl; the merchant's rescue from the tomb; Doctor Gulick Brandt's assumption of the office of executor, when the will to that effect had been destroyed; their coming to London; the discovery of Sarah Marks and her story; all was set forth, including Victor's intended claim to the hereditary title of Lord Harold Blair, Earl of—

Throughout the whole of which, detective Joseph Fleet paid strictest attention, and marveled not a little at what he heard. But, he was matter-of-fact, and did not dwell mentally very long upon the singular complication. He was ready to arrange things the moment Victor concluded, saying:

"Now, Mr. Fleet—"

"Joe Fleet," interrupted the detective. "Well, as you please. Our object is, to be satisfied, to a certainty, that Hallison Blair, or rather, Hallison Gregor, with his associate, Gulick Brandt, did first bury Mr. Herndon alive, for purposes of his own; and did, afterward, attempt my life, because I was likely to unmask them. Do you understand?"

"Understand? Oh, yes; I understand that I've got a pretty difficult job. And, how the deuce am I to get at a knowledge of this thing, unless I place a pistol to my forehead, and make him swear that he did do this and so? Umph!"

He reflected upon what was before him, but presently declared himself equal to any task imaginable in his line; and then arose to depart.

"There's nothing else besides the object you've stated, is there?"

"Nothing."

"And when are you going to kick up this row?"

"Our lawyers informed us this afternoon, that they were ready at any moment, only waiting for us to explain our wishes. I replied that I should probably be prepared within a few days. I desired a delay, in order to have you perform, if practicable, that with which you are now intrusted. If you can not do it, then we must strike without your aid. If you should fail, of course a few awaits you for your trouble."

"Good," commented Fleet. "I'll do what I can. Good-evening."

"Good-evening," returned Victor and the merchant; and the detective was gone.

Joe Fleet considered the duty in hand a most intricate one. He was half-inclined to admit that he had fallen into a desperate strait, in which his wits were at fault. He did not doubt that such a piece of villainy was probable; but, how to manufacture indubitable proofs, based upon actual investigation, appeared a task of towering insurmountability.

"Well," he thought, "I'll shift the matter to my brain, and sleep on it. Mayhap, by to-morrow, I'll be able to see how to work."

Upon his return to headquarters another note was handed him.

"Now," he exclaimed, "who the devil can this be, who writes in a lady's hand, and wants to see me on business? More business. Always business."

His question was answered when he opened the billet and read:

"Your early presence at No. —, square St. James, is particularly requested. Ask for, and see only LADY HALLISON BLAIR."

"Oh! then, what's up? She wants me, too!—the young man's former sweetheart. What can be the matter in that direction, I wonder?"

He lost no time in answering the summons, starting, straightway, for square St. James, and thinking deeply as he went.

Arrived before the house, he ascended the broad steps, when something fell in a shower about him, fluttering through the air like snow-flakes, only larger, confined to a certain space, and distinguishable as playing-cards.

"Hello! somebody's throwing a pack of cards out the window. He! he! he! I suppose my lord and lady have quarreled over a game of whist, and she's settled the matter by throwing the cards on my head. Lucky they weren't stones! And now, your humble servant, Joe Fleet, out of consideration for the reputation of the house of Blair, will take the pains to prevent unpleasant gossip in the neighborhood," saying which, he carefully collected the cards that lay scattered upon the pavement, mumbling the while:

"Nice cards these. So! 'jack's' up, 'king's' down, 'queen' on her head. 'Clubs' must be trumps, up-stairs, where that light burns! Not 'hearts,' I'll bet a shilling!" and so forth, until he had stowed the entire pack in his pocket.

Then he rung the bell, and was admitted to the long, broad, smooth-floored, richly-decorated, brightly-illuminated hall.

"I've come to see Lady Blair," he said, briefly, brushing past the man.

"Ye-hes, sir," bowed the servant; "what name shall I say, sir? Walk into the parlor if you please, sir."

"Joe Fleet, hurry."

"Ye-hes, sir," with another bow.

"Then, hurry, and don't stand there wriggling like a man with a pain in his stomach."

"Ye-hes, sir."

"Be quick!—do you hear?" taking a step toward the other and frowning.

The man disappeared on winged feet, and at the expiration of a few minutes returned to find the detective, in a side parlor, pacing to and fro, lost in thought, and exhibiting a carriage of such truly independent ease with which he used the walls of the proud, wealthy, exacting Lord Blair as to astonish the menial. Besides, Fleet was indulging in a strain of broken, incomprehensible utterances; arching and contracting his brows; patting his hands upon his folded arms; evidently resolving something in his mind, and also impatient at having to wait.

"Crackey!"

"Ha!" exclaimed Joe Fleet, spying him. "Now, devils catch you! how long have you been standing there?—idiot! Stop your quivering! You set my nerves on edge."

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"What do you mean by 'ye-hes, sir'?"

"Ye-hes, sir," again! Well—jackass!—and what did she say?"

"That if you was a mind, to be sure—of course she'd—that's to say, if you choose—I might—you—hif it was convenient—we—"

"Now—fool!—you've forgotten what she did say."

"Ye-hes, sir; I've forgot what she—"

"Ho! you have, eh? See now! I'm going to make you remember!" and the way in which he snatched up a bound volume from a table near him, said, as plainly as words:

"This book shall break your skull; ventilate your brains; aid your memory. Look out!"

"Ye-hes, sir. I was about to say, sir, my lady would like to see you in her apartments up-stairs, if you please; ye-hes, sir."

"Good. Now, then, lead the way. And stop that twisting, or I'll put a bullet through your cranium!" With this latter admonition, he followed the intimidated servant from the parlor, and ascended the stairs to the rooms designated by Lady Hallison Blair, who anxiously awaited his coming.

And, with all her changed life, seeming buoyancy, endless luxury of surrounding, had Pauline ceased to love Victor Hassan?

Considering her pure heart, gentle nature, rapt affection, would it be reasonable to suppose that she, who, in words of fervent sincerity, when she conversed with her father, declared an aversion to Hallison Blair even as a friend, should feel the happiness she simulated, and which others believed? Not so. Though she resignedly bore the cross put upon her through base design; though she displayed, by word and action, a contentment with her lot, though she graciously permitted, and appropriately acknowledged, the homage paid her on every side; still, there existed in the secret recesses of her heart a dreary, desolate something which wrought a constant but concealed sorrow.

The note she had received from the footman of the bridal carriage, on the day of her wedding, had been treasured jealously, and was stained with bitter tears that had fallen from her lustrous eyes at times when she would seek privacy, and read and re-read the lines upon that precious fragment. It was a fond relic of one who had been "all-in-all" to her—the only being remaining after the burial of her father, on whom she could bestow her full, undivided love; and he, in that hour when she deemed him nigh, was torn from her by a fate as cruel to realize as the will of the Omnipotent.

The words upon the hastily-scribbled note were:

"Pauline!—darling! Lost to me. But I am ever nigh you!"

Yet she had not seen him since the day on which her father was discovered dead in the library at the Home Mansion! If ever nigh, why not come to speak a welcome word? Why not gladden her sight?—exchange a greeting?—utter a word of whispered recognition? Her fated portion was the harder in this ban.

"The miserable have no other medicine, but only hope."

Amid the gay scenes, the festive throngs with which she mingled, her eyes eagerly sought for him; but, as often as she strained her vision, as often was disappointment the result; and she would cease the rippling laugh or merry speech, become silent, pensive, unmindful of the compliments incessantly showered from tongues of admiring friends.

Withal, her position as Lady Hallison Blair was maintained despite the gnawing agony of mind forever hers; and even the Englishman did not imagine the struggle constantly burning, and heroically screened, within the bosom of his calm, beautiful wife. The many drives, with showy livery, and in blazing display, were not without an object beyond mere pleasure. That object was a nurtured hope that she might see Victor—that he might see her. All in vain! He was, it would seem, held from her by a merciless decree; and the days, the weeks passed, until her suffering was augmented by despair.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 59.)

"What do you mean by 'ye-hes, sir'?"

"Ye-hes, sir," again! Well—jackass!—and what did she say?"

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"Now—fool!—you've forgotten what she did say."

"Ye-hes, sir; I've forgot what she—"

"Ho! you have, eh? See now! I'm going to make you remember!" and the way in which he

The chief had previously warned all his companions that it would be necessary to start at night, as doubtless the Shawnees would have scouts watching upon the hills above, who would instantly detect in the daytime the presence of any canoe on the waters.

No objection was made. The horses were turned loose in the hope that, hampered as they were, they might be easily found on their return; and then every man, rifle in hand, stood upon the shore, ready to embark whenever the guides gave the signal. The canoe was remarkable for its length, being, in fact, of the size usually denominated war-canoes, and capable, despite its fragile make, of carrying quite half a dozen more than it would be called upon to bear.

The rowers were already in their places, when a low exclamation from the scout made all stand still as statues in the gloom, as they saw two canoes shoot out from a point not more than a quarter of a mile to the right, and make directly up the lake.

"Tis the foul gang," said Steve, clutching his gun; "when shall you and I make better acquaintance with the vagabones?"

"I can not distinguish them from Indians," observed Roland, sternly.

"Horse-thief; white Indian," put in Kenewa, in his broken English.

"Then, in heaven's name, push out," said the captain. "A brush with the villains will do me good."

"But, captain, observed Steve, as all took their seats, the young man being close to him, 'as we're bound to bring off the pretty ones fast, 'tain't likely we're going to make the Indians as wise as ourselves. Let us do our duty by the gals first, and then for these ring-tail roasters. I'm your man. I'm death on, and shan't sleep happy nary night till one of them villains has had the full contents of old Never-miss.'

Roland rung the hand of his faithful friend, and then no more was said.

The Bandits of the Scioto had taken their course somewhat to eastward, apparently desirous of keeping within the deep shadows of the tall trees. This probably decided the movements of Kenewa, who glided along shore for some little time, until an island concealed the white thieves from view. Then he at once pushed forward at his utmost speed, as if desirous to be first at the point he had in his own mind selected for a landing.

The canoe rippled through the water at a speed which showed how well she had been built, sliding over the surface with an ease and grace that anywhere but on that deserted water must have commanded attention. They were very soon in what were called by the runners, the Narrows of the lake, and stole swiftly and cautiously among the numberless little islands, aware that the red-skins might have been cunning enough to leave an ambush on one of them.

At length the Narrows were passed, when they found themselves not fifty feet from the shore, with the hills receding, clothed in the summer garb of green and brown and red.

Kenewa checked the canoe and spoke in a low tone to Steve, using the Huron language. As he did so, he pointed to a line of white water that ran in mimic waves and breakers from the nearest island to the shore.

"Tis judgmental," said Steve, with a smile, as the canoe was pushed close to the line, "we must wade. The canoe, which is our safety, must be laid up hereabouts; so, lead the way, captain."

As all knew that the white water indicated a shallow, no remarks were made, and all stepped into the lake and began wading for the shore; while Steve and Kenewa secured the canoe in a natural harbor, where it would be difficult for the most cunning to find it. They then followed their comrades, whom they reached before any landed.

CHAPTER XXII.

A SHAWNEE TOWN.

THEY were now in an enemy's country, surrounded by dangers of the most appalling character, and it therefore behooved them to be careful to the last degree. They had not only the Shawnees to contend against, but the Bandits of the Scioto, who, whatever might be their grievances against the reds, led by Theanderigo, were their own bitter enemies—men not in any way to be trusted, and likely at any moment to coalesce with the enemy should opportunity offer.

Kenewa led his companions under the trees that overhung the bank, crept up the rude and rugged shore, and then struck into the thickets. However superficial his actual knowledge of the hills and valleys of this vast wilderness, he did not hesitate to plunge into its depths with the freedom of a man accustomed to its privations and difficulties. The Avengers followed him on his labors, way without a murmur or a question, until they were in the very heart of a wood so dense as to admit of no progress without constant crawling.

Kenewa spoke a few words to Steve.

"You're quite right, red-skin," he said, "quite right. I scent the Shawnees myself. Their clear sky through them tree-tops, and they're mighty near the wigwams of the rascals. Here we must halt and hide while the chief and myself go out scouting."

"One moment," replied Roland. "You and Kenewa have guided us here in a marvelous manner, and I thank you; but do not forget that I command. I must accompany you."

"Just as you please, cap'n," said Steve, with a smile; "only we shall be a mighty tall party of scouts for so small an army! I see the chief is going alone by the brook, while we keep more to the right. As every man wishes his hair safe on his head let him lie close until we see what is to be done."

All at once agreed. The occasion was one admitting of no doubt. They were in a dangerous and perilous position, in which caution and prudence would be of far more importance than all the reckless bravery in which any of the party might feel disposed to indulge.

"You are a purty good hand at an Injine bow, Tom," he said, pointing to Little Bear's weapon, which Martha had brought with her; "if you can nose a turkey or a doe it might be useful. Some hole must be found to make a fire; this here scouting is terrible hungry work," he added.

"All right," said Tom, nodding. "I'll try; it ain't the first time I've seen a bow and arrow. I used to do some tall shooting with 'em."

Steve made no reply, but again casting his eyes upward, he took his way under the gloomy forest arches, followed by Roland.

In about ten minutes they were near an opening in the trees; they were on the right trail.

The stream skirted this plain, and on its borders there were some forty or fifty lodges, rudely and somewhat hastily erected by means of logs, brush, and earth, with far more idea of comfort than order and beauty.

"Them's the Shawnees," whispered Steve; "but it's quite clear the villains—the thieving, loading, vagabones—aye, too many for us to attack, though I and Kenewa and half a dozen Hurons fought 'em once."

"Why not again?"

"Well, cap'n, you see we was fortified like just then, as it may be, in a good block; but yar we've to attack. No, no; we must use cunning and overreach the crafty knaves. Hist!"

The scout turned to the left of their position. They were kneeling under the sweeping boughs of a beach tree, and listening attentively. Though moving with extreme caution, he was certain that some one was at hand.

He ventured on the hiss of a serpent with such startling effect as to make Roland gaze rapidly around, when he saw the dusky figure of Kenewa crawling in upon them.

A brief but earnest conversation took place between Steve and Kenewa, during which the latter lay close upon the ground to glance over the plain. The voices of the white man and chief were animated, though the tone was so low as to be nearly inaudible. Presently it ceased altogether.

"Well," said Roland, whose eyes had been fixed on the Indian camp, "what have you decided? But where is the Indian? I saw him flat and motionless upon the ground only a minute ago."

"But a Injine does a deal in a minute," laughed Steve. "He's half-way to the camp by this time."

Roland, mute with astonishment, looked forward on the ground to where the Indian should have been, but his dark form had utterly vanished, and all they could do was to wait his pleasure.

Every moment Roland expected to hear the savage cry of the Shawnees, shouting with delight at the capture of a prisoner so important; every minute he expected to behold a dozen dark forms leaping from the wigwams and clutching the imprudent warrior. But no sounds came from the Indian lodges; no dark, glancing specters moved about.

The village was in repose—the repose of utter security, and whatever Kenewa was doing, his adventurous undertaking had as yet caused no evil or disagreeable result. The space of ground between the village and the ambushade of the scouts was a meadow with high grass, that fluttered in green waves to the uneasy breeze. The distance was fifty yards, so that though the moon was not yet risen, and the stars were concealed by the clouds, still, to their keen and accustomed eyes, every object in the hemisphere of wigwams was clearly visible.

A dull fire glowed in the center. It had, ever since they came to the skirts of the forest, been simply a glowing mass of embers, but suddenly a dark figure passed across it, threw on some fuel, and a blaze lit up the whole scene.

The figure by the fire was that of an old man, who evidently had come forth from his lodge because he couldn't sleep, for he seated himself on a log, lit his pipe, and fell into a fit of musing. They could, by means of the blaze, which fully illumined his face, see that he was a handsome Indian, with intellectual countenance and a frame not yet chilled by the snows of winter nor scared by the hot sun of summer.

His head was resting on his hand as he sat musing—of what, who can tell? His mouth lazily and occasionally emitted clouds of smoke, which ascended slowly to the stratum of air above. Suddenly he rose to an upright position, and his dark eyes glanced swiftly and keenly on every side. Then every movement of surprise ended. His musket lay untouched and to all appearance unnoticed at his side, but his nostrils were dilated, his head was turned a little to one side, while his quick and rapid glances ran over every object within the range of his vision.

"He has heard Kenewa," said Roland.

"He has," whispered Steve.

Both were deeply moved at the dangerous position in which the Huron was placed, surrounded by his enemies, and with no weapon save his knife.

"God help him!" whispered Steve, after a pause, as the warrior rose, moved away from the fire, and walked slowly toward his wigwam, behind which, however, he glided, and next minute might be seen hurrying under cover of the lodges toward the extremity of the clearing, where a number of rocks or cliffs, surmounted by tall trees, formed the western boundary of the village.

Both clutched their rifles, for both felt they could not consistently allow their Indian friend to be captured without firing a shot.

Again a figure came in front of the wigwams, stalked slowly toward the fire, lit a pipe, and seated itself on a log, with his back to the huts and its face directly toward the forest. A few sticks, quite dry and inflammable, were then cast on the pile, and by its light the outlying pale-faces recognized Kenewa.

A grim smile illumined his countenance as he smoked his pipe, which, after a whiff or two, he replaced in his belt, laying his head on the log, and appeared about to indulge in comfortable slumber.

The two men breathed hard and anxiously.

"Is the Huron mad?" said Roland; "has he utterly lost leave of his senses? What can he mean?"

"Hist! You mustn't talk so loud, cap'n. Just look how fine he's taking in the Shawnees."

The old warrior, who had heard the suspicious sounds, had now gone right round the wigwams to the cliffs at the other end, and on turning toward the fire became aware that another Indian was up, probably as sleepless as himself, and also very likely the man who had disturbed him.

No longer anxious, the Shawnee came slowly along, and made straight for the fire, which was now again a low mass of embers, stirred it up, and looked for his supposed companion.

"Ugh!" he grunted out, in no very pleasant tones, as he saw that he was quite alone.

The man now looked fairly bewildered. It was not likely that any one in his tribe would be playing tricks with him, practiced jokes being regarded by Indians as the height of folly and wickedness, as they never did any good and too often inflicted grievous harm. The fancy never entered his head that those they had left upon the borders of Prairie Lake would have followed him up.

His reflections were brought to a close by what might be termed a grand crash; as,

while he was still looking round him, there arose a loud and joyous cry from the forest—a sound that, while it roused the Indian to other thoughts, sufficiently startled the scouts to make them lie close beneath the sassafras-tree.

"What can that be? They are rejoicing at some victory."

"I know most of the cries of the forest," replied Steve to the question of his commanding officer; "but though I know they are glad about something, yet am I a sufficient stranger among the Shawnees to be ignorant of what it means."

"Hunter party come home—kill much deer," said the guttural voice of Kenewa, close to their elbows.

"The Huron!" whispered Roland.

"That was not well done, chief, to advance like that to the muzzle of a loaded rifle; it wasn't wise. I might have fired."

"Not when woods full of Shawnee," laughed Lightfoot.

"Perhaps not; though when a man is scared a bit there's no saying. But shall we watch the knaves and see what they are up to, or shall we go back to the camp?"

"Shawnee make feast—eat—much noise—no hear us—Kenewa will stay here."

The scout bowed his head, as if satisfied with the other's decision. He then, in brief, but clear and picturesque language, described the result of his discoveries.

He had spoken to Matata!

Scarcely had the cry arisen from the forest when, by the doubtful twilight, they saw twenty or thirty forms rise alternately from the cover of the tall coarse grass in front of the lodges, and then sink again from the sight, as it were to burrow in the earth. Several old women, tottering on their solitary wigwags, came forth, and, not content with heaping wood on the embers already burning, made other fires from the larger piles of brush which lay about the clearing.

As the flame arose, its power exceeded that of the parting day, and assisted to render objects at the same time more distinct and more hideous. The whole scene may now be said to have formed a striking picture, set in its frame of tall and dark pines.

A band of red-skins, hunters from the plains below, now appeared, carrying the trophies of the day's victory.

It was now clear that a feast was about to follow the labors of the day, the more readily that the village appeared to be without much food of any kind.

Kenewa now spoke. He had counted the lodges of the Shawnees; and he demonstrated this by opening his two hands five times and then holding up one finger, to signify fifty-one. The warriors under the lieutenant of Theanderigo had not arrived, but there were already twenty men able to bear arms, besides youths and women. This number, however, the Huron declared would be as nothing if they took them by surprise, fired the wigwams, and shot down the most dangerous as they came forth.

The girls were secreted in a large and well-made council-house at the end of the village. It was surrounded by a stockade, and abutted against the rocky cliff that marked the boundary of the pine forest. There was a deep dry ditch round it into which he had crept, and, as usual, attracted Matata's attention by means of the chirrup of the squirrel—a favorite signal between the dusky lovers of the prairie.

They had been two days in the village, and had as yet heard nothing of the party of horsemen, though from the girls of the village she had extracted several pieces of information not at all calculated to ease the minds of the pursuers.

A great festival was approaching—the autumn corn-feast, or something of that kind—at which the fate of all the prisoners was to be decided, and Prairie Rose had no hesitation in saying that her fate was sealed. The open bland courtesies and secret scowls and hatred of the wives of Theanderigo left her nothing to disguise.

But whether the white girls were to be sold, sacrificed, or made the means of barter with the Bandits, she could not say.

This was all that the young chief had to tell, for he had been disturbed in his conversation by the vigilance of the aged warrior.

"And now," said Roland, speaking in a hushed tone, while the wild beating of his heart could scarcely be concealed, "is it not time we brought up our companions? The Indians are preparing for the feast. One bold volley and a charge, and we shall gain possession of our dear girls."

"Ugh!" said Kenewa.

"It isn't do! it won't do!" said Steve. "Ye are two hot-headed youths, and take no note of the science of forest warfare. The Shawnees are as cunning asimps, and their warriors may be lying a hundred yards from us, for what we know. I ain't surprised at you, captain, seeing you are a white man, and not like myself, a native, you say, of the woods; but I am ashamed on Kenewa, who is a warrior, and no boy, and who should know better."

"Ugh!" was the only word spoken by the Huron, as, with a grave smile, he held out his hand to Steve.

"This infernal procrastination is enough to drive one mad," said Roland. "If we can not attack—"

"We can run, captain," said Steve; "for yar comes the varmin'!"

While he spoke there came from a distance a loud triumphant cry, as of warriors returning from the war-trail; the sounds woke the echoes of the forest, and made the whole party in the village start to their feet—women and children, men and boys—to welcome back the wanderers.

As it was known they brought no pole covered with human scalps, carried like a victorious banner at their head, there was no unusual demonstrativeness, though the women and children were sufficiently glad to welcome back, the former their hard task-masters, the latter their too often indulgent fathers.

Again the fires were replenished, and again additional food was hastily prepared. While this was going on a long line of dark warriors crossed the clearing toward the village.

Nearly at the head of the column, but so surrounded by Indians as to make their features unrecognizable, walked two prisoners. "By the Eternal!" said Steve, almost forgetting his usual caution, "if the dam'd dusky hides ain't caught 'Tom and Martha! Thunder! My! We're in a pretty pickle! Folger me!"

And without waiting for another word, Steve glided through the close and pathless thicket in the direction of the hiding-place of the whole body of the Avengers, who were, by the capture of Tom Smith, placed in a position of real and immediate danger. Kenewa spoke a few words in his musical

and plaintive language, to which Steve nodded, and then the Indian left them without any further explanation. It was fortunate for the scout that he knew the country so well, or rather that he had taken such careful notice of the way he had come, for the night was pitchy-dark, and none but a thorough woodsman could have had a chance of finding his way.

They found the Avengers asleep round a fire, that just emitted a dim, faint light, to illumine their bronzed and eager faces.

"Put out that 'ere fire," said Steve, solemnly. "Tom and Martha is took, and the Lord knows how soon we may follow. That 'ere fire mout cost us our scalps, every man."

"Martha took?" said the anxious voice of her father, speaking in a low, earnest tone; "how was that?"

"Well, I expect she and Tom was doing a bit of courtin'," said Steve, dryly, "and got took. But no harm all happen to her; the wust is, maybe she'll lose her lover, in which case Shawnee scalps will be cheap."

The scout spoke these words with a determination and sternness that indicated his deep feeling. Tom Smith was a favorite of his, and one whom he had known from childhood.

"Who'd-a-thought the lad so careless?" he muttered. "Well, well, there's no accountin' for a man when he's got a gal in his head, and I've seen him that way inclined some days. But here comes the Indian."

Kenewa stood once more in their midst, waving his hands for utter silence, after which he stooped low, and for full ten minutes listened to every sound of the forest.

Then rising, he proceeded to light a large resinous torch, which he lifted on high, signaling all to follow. No one made any objection, but all clutched their arms.

The Huron led them now to a narrow dell, or rather ravine, grown thickly on the side with trees, some of which grew in inaccessible situations on high and precipitous banks, clinging among rocks and loose stones, and promising to afford to brave men the means of defending the spot against thousands. Most of the trees were wasted and decayed.

At the bottom of the ravine was a hard, beaten path, made by the deer in their daily visits to the lake to drink.

It was a wild and dreary walk, made on this occasion none the less pleasant by the babbling, brawling brook which ran alongside at no great distance until it seemed to disappear in a kind of black gully. They now made their way through dense thickets toward a spot where a hollow roar of water could be heard, to find themselves suddenly on a ledge of flat rock projecting over the side of a chasm not less than fifty feet deep, where the dark mountain stream fell rumbling over a precipice, to be swallowed up by a deep, black, yawning gulf.

The Indian began descending the almost precipitous side of the chasm for about ten feet, when he faced a rock nearly perpendicular, with a narrow ledge, on their own level, of about two feet.

An old log, a tree that had fallen from above, was cast across as a bridge, and having many projecting branches, they were all able to cross, Kenewa going first and Steve last.

As soon as the scout was over he dived the log after him by main strength, and the whole party dived into a cavern which was well known both to Kenewa and Steve. Here the Huron announced his intention of passing the night, and set the example by casting himself on the ground in a corner, where in a few minutes he was as sound asleep as if he slept in one of the wigwams of his tribe.

Others imitated him, fully expecting that they would have enough to do on the following day, and all somewhat gloomy at the idea that after that night they would be entirely without provisions.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 55.)

Seals.—The talents of the seal are manifold, from the agility which he displays in catching fish for his master, to the capacity he has shown in learning actually to speak. More than one seal has been taught to utter distinctly the word Papa, and several animals of the kind are reported to have gone even beyond, and to have pronounced several words at a time. Nor must their love of music be forgotten, which is so great that they will rise from the water and remain nearly standing upright as long as the instrument is played, to which they listen with unmistakable pleasure. It is not so very long since one of this remarkable race came every day for six weeks from the waters of the Mediterranean, to take her rest under the divan of a custom-house officer in Smyrna. The latter had tamed her, and placed a few rough planks at the distance of about three feet from the water's edge under his couch, and on these boards the seal loved to rest for several hours, giving vent to her delight, oddly enough, in a profusion of sighs like those of a suffering man. She ate readily the rice and the bread which were offered her, though she seemed to have some trouble in softening the former sufficiently to swallow it with ease. After an absence of several days, the affectionate creature reappeared with a young one under the arm, but a month later she plunged one day, frightened into the water, and was never seen again.

Nearly about the same time, another seal appeared suddenly in the very midst of the port of Constantinople, undisturbed by the number of caiques dashing to and fro, and the noise of a thousand vessels with their crews and their passengers. One day the boat of the French legation was crossing over to Pera, loaded with wine for the ambassador. A drunken sailor was sitting astride on the cask, and singing boisterously, when all of a sudden the seal raised himself out of the water, seized the sailor with his left arm, and threw himself with his prey back in the water. He reappeared at some distance, still holding the man under his fin, as if wishing to display his agility, and then sunk once more, leaving the frightened, sober sailor, to make his way back to the boat. Surely, nothing more than one such occurrence was needed to give rise to the many romances of former ages; if the same, even, had happened in earlier days, the seal would have been a beautiful Nereid, who, having conceived a passion for the hapless sailor, had risen to take him down to her palace under the waves.

Long Talk.—An Indian chief, in a telegraph office in Montana, being told that the operator was "talking with a white brother two thousand miles distant" gave it as his opinion that that was the "longest talk" he had ever witnessed.

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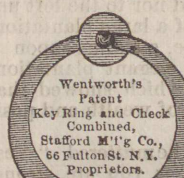
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SLIGHTLY TREMULOUS.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I'd a friendly old shake with A. Gue,
Who into my study came storming,
And he shook me an hour or two
In a way that was very alarming.
I never had met him before,
Nor enjoyed his delightful acquaintance;
But his visit I've cause to deplore,
And shall think of it long with repentance.

He announced not himself at the door,
But came in with a great deal of boldness,
And though but a moment before
I was warm, I received him with coldness.
And he shook me clear out of my chair,
As I sat there in front of my fire;
And he shook me plum into despair,
In a manner I didn't admire.

He shook me all over the floor—
Indeed, in a very unfair way;
And he shook me clear out of the door,
And also clear down the long stairway.
And he shook me against all the walls;
And he shook me against all my wishes;
He shook from my shoulders the shawl,
And I shook from the cupboard the dishes.

He shook me clean out of my mind;
And he shook me clear into my bed, too;
And he shook me clear out of my chair,
And he shook me clear out of my head, too.
I considered my doom was to be
Well shaken before I was taken;
And thought 'twould be better for me,
To be taken before I was shaken.

He shook me so awfully rough
That the bed went to smash in a minute,
And the house shook from collar to roof,
As also did every thing in it.
He shook me so awfully rough
That I thought I'd swallowed an earthquake,
And at last when he shook himself off,
Right gladly I shook with a *mirth*-quake.

Trapped ;

OR,

THE BAFFLED ROYALIST.

BY C. D. CLARK.

THE tramp of a coming horseman broke the stillness of a Carolina solitude, in the early revolutionary days, and a young man, admirably mounted, and dressed in a sort of military fatigue dress, wearing the three-cornered hat and long riding-coat of the day, and sitting his horse with admirable ease and grace, dashed through a low cypress grove at a swinging pace. Something in his air, aside from his dress, bespoke the soldier. He had a handsome, clear-cut, but joy face, with thin lips, which he had a habit of compressing at times, giving him an expression of cruelty. Otherwise, he seemed to be a gentleman in every sense of the word; but one you would hardly care to meet in a close grapple, where a struggle meant either his life or yours.

He rode on for several miles, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left until he reached the edge of a large plantation, and saw in the distance, standing upon a slope, a low-roofed but elegant plantation-house, built in a style which showed that the owner was a person of wealth and position.

"This must be mine," he muttered. "Yes, Annette Clayton, proud as you are, strong in your love of country, as you choose to call your rebellion, you *must* be my wife. I wonder if I have a rival?"

A little negro swung open the gate which led through an avenue of oaks up to the house, and he rode through without noticing the boy, who held out his hand for a gift. The lad looked after him in unalloyed disgust.

"Yah, you bloody Tory," he muttered beneath his breath. "You no gemman, or you gib a boy someth'ing, if it only a *bit*. You no gemman; you h'ar dat!"

Although he thus relieved his mind, he took especial pains that his words should not become audible to the other. But he made no movement to follow and take charge of the horse, leaving that thankless task to another boy, who received no more notice than the first. The visitor was shown into a handsomely-furnished parlor, in which were various articles that bespoke the ownership of a lady. A guitar, a harp, and numberless little articles of taste and *vertu*. He threw himself indolently upon a sofa, and looked carelessly about him, until the door opened and a lady came in, who dropped him a low and graceful courtesy, but did not offer to give him her hand.

"Annette!" he cried.
"Miss Clayton, except my intimate friends, Mr. Gerard Dalton," she replied, coldly. She was a beautiful little creature, with the rich complexion and glorious eyes which bespoke her Creole blood, dressed tastefully but without display. The only ornament she wore was a diamond brooch at the throat.

"Is this the way you use me, after weeks of absence, Annette?"
"I treat you as you deserve," replied Annette. "You come to me wearing the uniform of the men who are seeking, with bloody hands, to crush out the liberties of a free people. My family always have been loyal to constituted authority, but I should blush for the man among them who would not take up the sword when his own rights and liberties are assailed."

"But I had your promise, Annette," cried Gerard. "Long ago, before this wicked rebellion began, you promised to be my wife."
"I promised to be the wife of a true-hearted Carolinian, not the man who is in the pay of the oppressors of my country."
"How could I do otherwise, Annette? Think it over. All I possessed was in such a position that I must lose all if I took the side of the Colonies. My sympathies, my interests, every thing were upon the side of the king. Would you have me false to my own self?"

"You have made your own election, and must take the consequences. I can not marry a man who fights on the side of the oppressor."

"You will drive me mad. Listen to me, Annette. I love you dearly. Every pulse of my heart, every aspiration of my soul, is for you. I would guard you tenderly to the end of life and be to you a true husband, if you will consent to change your decision."

"No, Gerard; I loved you once, but my idol is shattered, and I could never feel for you as I once did. Let all be at an end between us forever. As the son of my father's dearest friend, you are welcome, and the house is at your disposal, but you must not speak of love; it is useless."

"This is your unalterable decision?"

"It is."
"I did not come here unprepared, Annette Clayton. A week ago it was whispered in Charleston that you had forgotten me, and had another lover. I could not quite believe you false, but now I know that Rumor did not lie."

"Sir!" she began, in an angry tone, moving away from him. She did not proceed,

for there came a tap at the door, and a negro girl entered.

"What is it, Rachel?" she said.
"Mr. Phillip Warrington wishes to pay his respects."

"Warrington," muttered Gerard. "That is the very man. A moment, Annette. Ask Rachel to show Mr. Warrington into the other parlor, and I promise you not to say any thing to offend you."

Annette made a sign to Rachel, and she disappeared.

"I beg your pardon," said Gerard, humbly. "I have done wrong, and my sin has this atonement, that, by my own rash act, I have lost the only woman I have ever loved or ever can love. Forgive the mad words of one who will never again offend you, and give me your hand in token of farewell."

"Oh, Gerard," she cried, impulsively, giving him both hands, "if you had been true to your country in the hour of her need, this would never have happened."

"It is over," he said, sadly, kissing her hands. "Good-by to love between us two, and let us be friends. Now introduce me to your friend, as I have not the honor of knowing him."

"The gentleman is on the other side," said Annette, hesitating. "You had better not meet him."

"I supposed that he was a Whig," he said, gayly. "Never mind that."

So she introduced them, and as Gerard looked into the handsome, generous face of the young Lieutenant of Sumter's corps, he understood that this man was his rival, and a dangerous one, too. Dalton remained about an hour in the house, and then, mounting his horse, bade farewell to Annette, and rode away with downcast eyes. Once out of the plantation, he turned and shook his hand fiercely at the house:

"If I can not marry you, Annette Clayton, I can at least be avenged."

He was not long in striking the blow. That very afternoon Phillip Warrington, accepted as the suitor of Annette Clayton since she had dismissed Gerard, was assailed in the cypress by four men, and after a desperate struggle, in which one of the assailants was killed, he was taken prisoner, and carried away.

A week after this, Tarleton's corps, in which Dalton was a lieutenant, moved up the valley in pursuit of Sumter. The "Game Cock," having an inadequate force, refused to meet the Briton, and easily eluded



TRAPPED.

his pursuit. The troops of Tarleton camped upon the river, two miles from Clayton's, and the same day a slave brought him a letter, written in a hand which he well knew. It ran thus:

"FRIEND GERARD:—Since you have been here, I have borne upon me heavily that I must see you again. Take horse and ride to the cypress hollow behind the plantation, to the deserted cabin of Black Ned. You know the place well, and there I will meet you. My overseer will be at the edge of the cypress and guide you. Perhaps I may change my decision."
"ANNETTE."

The young royalist clapped his hands in delight, and hurried off to the colonel's quarters to ask leave of absence. Ten minutes after he was in the saddle, riding rapidly toward the Clayton place. Just at the edge of the plantation he turned into a bridge-path, skirting the plantation, and plunged into the cypress, and rode for half an hour along a tangled path until he saw, just before him, a plainly dressed man, who beckoned him to come on.

"Miss Clayton is in the cabin yonder," he said, pointing to a dilapidated building, half concealed in a growth of tangled ferns. "She is anxious to see you."

"Many thanks," said Gerard. "Lead the way, if you will be so kind."

The man moved on in front, and opened the door of the cabin. Gerard hastily dismounted and entered, where he found Annette standing near a window, wrapped in a cloak.

"I thought you would come," she said, quietly, as she repulsed a movement to take her hand. "Remember that we are not alone, Lieutenant Dalton."

"You sent for me," he said, eagerly. "I think I should come out of my grave at your call."

"My purpose in sending for you was twofold. Since your visit at my plantation, a great evil has been done. The gentleman whom you saw that day has disappeared."

"Lieutenant Warrington?"

"Yes; do you know where he is?"

"I do. He is a prisoner in Tarleton's camp, where he was taken by the men who captured him. I can see plainly that it is not love for me which prompted you to send for me, but to get some knowledge of the man who has taken my place in your heart."

"You have guessed rightly, sir. I have not the slightest feeling of love, or even of respect for you now."

"I knew it. Then let me intrust you with a secret. I captured this young Whig. He is my prisoner and under my care. I will treat him so that he shall pray for

death, unless you reconsider your determination to cast me off."

"Do you mean that?"

"Precisely."

"You waylaid a guest of mine, whose hand you had taken in friendship that very day, and consigned him to a hopeless captivity."

"I did," he cried, vindictively.

"And you will ill-treat him if I do not promise to become your wife?"

"I will. I have more power than you think. For, girl, when you insulted me, cast me off, because I did my duty to my king, you were guilty of a wicked and foolish act. Your punishment is begun, and I will not spare you."

"I pray you, for your own sake, to think twice. Will you set Mr. Warrington at liberty?"

"I hope I am not such a fool. No! He shall feel what it is to come in my way, the low Whig!"

"Mercy is thrown away upon you since you will not do justice yourself. I will be the one to free Phillip from captivity, or at least insure his good treatment."

"You; ha! ha! ha!"

"You doubt my power, then. The time has come!"

The words appeared to be a signal, and the man who had first met him sprung in, and set his back against the door. At the same moment, half a dozen hardy Whigs poured in at the back of the building, and after an ineffectual struggle, the Tory was captured. They all wore the dress of Sumter's corps.

"Trapped!" the Tory hissed. "Oh, you false traitress!"

"Keep him a moment, gentlemen. You will be removed to the camp of Sumter, there to remain until such a time as Tarleton may see fit to set Phillip Warrington at liberty, in exchange for yourself, and you are to be treated in every respect as he is. Away with him, good friends!"

The crestfallen Tory was carried away, and Annette returned to the plantation. A week after, the exchange was effected, and Phillip returned to his friends. But, the story of Dalton's capture had reached the British camp, and the ridicule to which he was subjected forced him to exchange, and he was never seen again in Carolina.

When their section of country was freed from the detested enemy, Annette and Phillip were married, but the brave Whig never forgot how nobly the planter's daughter worked to save him from the hands of his rival.

Gerard Dalton was killed in the West Indies in a duel with one of his companions, some time after the war.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

Old Joe's Stratagem.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"THERE'S but one way outen this, cap'n," said the old trapper, "an' that's through the canyon yander," and he pointed to where the mountains were split asunder, showing a black-mouthed chasm that penetrated deep into their sides.

"Yes, Joe; I see," replied Captain Hays; "but how the deuce we are to pass there without alarming those on top I don't see. Look at that Indian squatted just in the mouth of the gully. How are we to pass him?"

"I *hep* got by wuss difficulties nor this, cap'n, an' I'll *durn* my ole leathers, if I don't b'leve we kin jess sarcumvent this 'un. Whar's Pedro?"

The word was passed from mouth to mouth, and presently a half-breed, carrying in his hand a coiled lasso, answered to the repeated calls, and came out of the chapparral.

As the opening remark of the trapper would indicate, we were in a difficulty, and wanted to find a way out of it.

At that time I had linked my fortunes, for the occasion, with the band of rangers under command of the famous Jack Hays, and we were then penetrating into the Blackfoot country with the intention of surprising one of their principal villages, where, we had been told, several white women and children were held captive.

The time chosen for the expedition was at the opening of the hunting season, when, according to custom, the warriors and young men, with a few exceptions, were absent on the plains in pursuit of game. We had traveled rapidly since starting, and were satisfied that, as yet, no alarm had been taken by the savages.

But an unexpected difficulty had suddenly sprung up before us.

We had approached the village from the north, and found the only way of access to it—namely, by the canon—guarded by a strong picket of the enemy.

By a strange oversight, the rangers had

neglected to take into consideration the fact that, on such occasions, this pass was always guarded.

The village lay in a valley upon the northern side of the range, and was inclosed, or nearly so, by a dense forest of pine and chapparral, into which the inhabitants would flee at the first alarm, taking their captives with them, and thus defeat the object of the expedition. The main body of the picket occupied the summit of the cliffs that walled the canon, while one of their number kept watch at the entrance.

Should this one give the alarm, it would be caught up by those above, and by them signaled to the inhabitants of the village.

Hence it became necessary to pass this sentinel, or else make a *detour* of more than forty miles, and that with the chance of running into some one of the hunting-parties.

We had approached the canon under cover of a belt of timber, and there halted to consider the means of getting rid of this serious obstacle.

Between us and the canon lay an open strip of prairie, without brush or brake to afford cover in approaching, perfectly level, and running clear up to the base of the cliffs; but just in front of the chasm there grew an immense live-oak, its gnarled and twisted branches reaching far out upon every side, perfectly straight, until, by their own weight, the extremities slightly drooped toward the earth; and perhaps this might be made available.

Such, at least, seemed to be Old Joe's idea, as was indicated by the question he put to the Mexican *vagabundo*.

"Do 'ee see the tree, Pedro?" he asked, pointing to the oak.

"Si," was the concise reply.

"Yes, I reckon. Well, do 'ee think es how yer could handle thet lariat up 'mong thet limbs?" again asked the trapper.

For an instant the *vagabundo* paused, and then, as though he had caught the trapper's meaning, he quickly answered:

"Yes! yes! I see. You mean so?" and the Mexican held the lasso aloft and permitted the loop to drop directly downward.

"You've guessed it, Mexy, by jingo!" exclaimed the trapper; "but do 'ee think yer kin drop the ring squar' over the nigger's top-knot?"

Receiving the assurance that the thing could be done, the two set about carrying the project into effect.

As yet I did not see the manner in which

still no sound had been heard, nor motion made, that would indicate their presence there. But suddenly the silence is broken by a strange, wild cry, not loud, but singularly distinct and prolonged.

We all recognize the sound. It is that made by the Mountain Cat, and it came from the foliage of the oak.

"That's his game, is it?" exclaimed Hays, with a hearty laugh. "Well, he'll play it to win; see if he don't."

As the cry of the wild-cat was heard, the Indian sentinel was seen to spring to his feet, and gaze intently in the direction of the tree.

Again it swelled forth—low, plaintive, child-like—and the savage, dropping his long lance, springs forward, seizes his bow, and begins stringing it, at the same time advancing towards the oak.

The other Indians have likewise heard the cry, and two or three of them are seen upon the edge of the cliff, watching their companion's movements.

Advancing slowly, the Blackfoot gradually circles about the tree, striving to pierce the thick foliage for a sight of the game, and in this manner passes beneath the overhanging arms, and is lost to view of those above. But to us in the chapparral he is yet visible. Step by step the keen-eyed savage passes back and forth, the string on the arrow's notch and the bow half bent.

Suddenly he is seen to pause; the weapon is lifted with a quick motion; another second and the shaft will have sped, when, quick as thought, a dark coil leaps downward, the loop settles fairly, and the savage is jerked from his feet, and held struggling in the air.

So quickly was the feat performed, that we could scarcely believe our own senses; but a moment later the figure of old Joe, sliding down the trunk, knife in hand, dissolved the spell of astonishment.

With a swift, strong blow he drove the blade into the struggling wretch's side, and gently eased the body to the earth.

We saw him hastily stripping it, then throw off his own outer garments and don the picturesque costume of the savage.

From the latter's pouch he procured the red and yellow pigments, rapidly applied them, and less than five minutes after the *real* Indian disappeared beneath the tree the false one strode forth in full view of his comrades upon the cliff, replied to their calls by a simple motion of the head, and coolly took his seat in the mouth of the canon, to all appearances the vigilant sentry the other had been.

"By ———, that was splendid!" exclaimed Hays, in a manner that told his earnestness, and the assertion was echoed all down the line in various expressive words.

Night came rapidly down, and when it had grown to an almost pitchy darkness, our band stole forth, leaving the horses in charge, and reached the mouth of the canon undetected.

Our watchful sentinel was on post, but passed us in without a challenge.

Through the rugged passage, out upon the plain beyond, and around the village we crept without alarm, and when the cordon had been drawn close in, the charge was sounded. I need only add that the expedition was an entire success, owing to Old Joe's Stratagem.

Beat Time's Notes.

I REG to offer the following remarkable cases in behalf of Dr. Killamquick's "Sure Shot for everything."

While I was in the army, my eyes got to running; the disease ran on until it got into my feet, and the worst of it was they never ran in the right direction. I was very far gone, especially when a battle was imminent, and a whole squad of men was necessary to recover me. One bottle got me along so well that I soon got my discharge. They hated so to see me go that they formed a procession in my favor which I headed myself, and we marched all around the camp, the drummers being just behind me. They cut all the buttons off my coat for keepsakes, and also my shoulder-straps, so I wouldn't be *strapped* on leaving. The colonel made a little speech, to which I hadn't words to reply, and I left regretfully. Once I had the sore throat in my heel, and had my nose injured at the toe, and one of my ears pained me terribly on the arm, but a piece of the cork, which I happened to swallow in a hurry, entirely relieved me.

I got a bad fit—of pants—and by sleeping in an attic room, I got a room-ate affection in the spine of my back, and a cold was awfully unsettled on my lungs, while it was very difficult for me to cough. One bottle made me cough with a great deal of facility, and restored me to my family.

A young friend of mine got very ill; he wasn't doing well at all, and was finally confined to his room—in jail—two months. A bottle or two immediately relieved him. He afterwards got a pain in the knee, and one bottle was applied. He tells me now that the pain is gone—also the knee.

It has been found to be a great thing on sight. A blind man applied some on his goggles and sees perfectly well.

For a long period and a semi-colon I had no nerves at all; but, on taking his medicine, I became very nervous.

The doctor has treated many invalids with marked success—they are marked by tombstones.

Persons who live far off must remember that the medicine is so strong and powerful they can be treated successfully at any distance. Send one of your boot-straps and a piece of your coat sleeve, so the doctor may tell the nature of your disease.

Neuralgia turned into the old-ralgia on short notice.

THE dark ages—old maids'. The golden age—coinage. *Pussed* age—untasted old butter. The age of Navigation—steer-age. The hopeless age—dispar-age. The fashionable age—lon-age. The best age—marriage. The worst age—dam-age.

PLASTERERS will please take notice that bids will be received for the plastering of the "room for improvement." A great many people occupy it at present, but, as the room is large, they won't interfere with the work.

CLERKING for a bricklayer—that is, promending with a parabol full of bricks or mortar up four flights of ladders on a red-hot day—is not my idea of saints' rest.

At sea they raise the wind with a windlass.

A VERY mournful tone—the tombs-tone.